

## LAYING OG TO REST: DEUTERONOMY 3 AND THE MAKING OF A MYTH

The defeat of King Og of Bashan is recalled several times in the Hebrew Bible, usually in relation to the similarly crushing victory of the Israelites over another Amorite king, King Sihon. Initially, the defeat of the latter king is recollected in order to encourage the Israelites that a further victory against their new foe is imminent (Num 21,23-25); following this, the two figures are recalled in parallel, as enemies whose all-encompassing destruction at the hands of the Israelites reminds of past glory and military success (Deut 1,4; 29,7; Josh 2,10; 9,10; Pss 135,11; 136,19-20; Neh 9,22). Deuteronomy 3 expands the original account of the military skirmish from Numbers 21, presenting a nearly verbatim description of the conquest (albeit in the first-person, as part of the speech of Moses), but goes on to add an additional detail not found elsewhere in any of the biblical traditions of Og, and which has caused much ink to be spilt in the course of the history of interpretation, both ancient and modern:

כי רק עוג מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים הגה ערשו ערש ברזל הלה הוא ברבת בני עמק  
תשע אמות ארכה וארבע אמות רחבה באמת איש

For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. Behold, his bed was a bed of iron. Is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit (Deut 3,11).

Most ancient commentators reconciled the overly large dimensions of Og's bed with the description of the king as a remnant of the Rephaim, depicted as giants elsewhere in the book of Deuteronomy (2,10-11) <sup>1</sup> — and certainly this would seem to be a coherent reading of the function of the story in Deuteronomy 3, where Og is implied to be a formidable opponent and hence his defeat all the more significant <sup>2</sup>. However, most modern-day commentators have interpreted both the iron object said to reside

<sup>1</sup> On the interpretation of King Og and his bed in rabbinic literature, see A. KOSMAN, "The Story of a Giant Story: The Winding Way of Og King of Bashan in the Jewish Haggadic Tradition", *HUCA* 73 (2002) 157-190; and Z. RON, "The Bed of Og", *JBQ* 40 (2012) 29-34. An early exception is Josephus, who seems to have been the first to have understood Og's "bed" as a grave (*Ant.* 5.125).

<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Israelites are apparently frightened when Og and his people "came out against them", hence the need for God to remind them of their former victory over Sihon.

in the Ammonite city of Rabbah following Og's death, and the role of Og himself, in far more esoteric terms. Thus, it is not a bed but a sarcophagus or tomb which Og possessed, and Og not just a king but the ruler of the underworld. This interpretation is made possible by drawing upon extra-biblical data from diverse periods, in connection with maximal interpretations of the rather paltry biblical references to Og and his domain in Bashan. In this paper, I will explore the interpretative decisions which have led to this near consensus view<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, several recent commentators have argued for a return to the plain sense interpretation of Deut 3,11, once again co-opting the traditional translation of "bed" for עֶרֶשׁ. While these readings have provided ample archaeological evidence for this interpretation<sup>4</sup>, as well as an explanation for the use of the image of the iron bed within the narrative context of Deuteronomy 3<sup>5</sup>, even so they have failed to deal with the chthonic connections that many scholars have understood to come along with the biblical and extra-biblical references to the Rephaim, Bashan, and the two other domains said to be connected to Og, Ashtoreth and Edrei (Deut 1,4<sup>6</sup>; Josh 12,4; 13,12; cf. 9,10; 13,31), and which led to the pervasive interpretation of Og as something like the "king of the dead" in the first place. Thus, this paper will examine the chthonic elements which have been connected to the Og story in both the biblical and extra-biblical data, before considering if this mythological framework is being recalled in Deuteronomy 3. Despite the scholarly ferment which has attempted to connect Og with the underworld, ultimately it will be shown that this connection is tenuous at best. The consensus view of Og as an underworld deity has been based upon the misunderstanding and synthesis of various traditions from the Bible and the ancient Near East, creating a tradition which would have been alien to both the scribe who wrote Deuteronomy 3, and his ancient audience. In this way, this paper is an attempt to finally lay Og to rest — not in a tomb or sarcophagus, but back into his iron bed.

<sup>3</sup> See the translations of עֶרֶשׁ as "sarcophagus" in NET and NEB; and as "coffin" in TEV and CEV.

<sup>4</sup> A.R. MILLARD, "King Og's Bed and Other Ancient Ironmongery", *Ascribe to the Lord. Biblical and Other Studies in Memory of Peter C. Craigie* (eds. L.M. ESLINGER – G.J. TAYLOR) (JSOTSup 67; Sheffield 1988) 481-492; ID., "King Og's Iron Bed: Fact or Fancy", *Bible Review* 6 (1990) 16-21.

<sup>5</sup> M. LINDQUIST, "King Og's Iron Bed", *CBQ* 73 (2011) 477-493.

<sup>6</sup> Deut 1,4 is unique in listing Ashtoreth as a location within Edrei; in all the other occurrences, these toponyms are clearly separate places.

## I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION: OG AS KING OF THE DEAD

The primary reason for interpreting Og in connection to the underworld is his relation to the רפאים, “Rephaim”, which in the Hebrew Bible have a dual referent, sometimes recalled as the giant inhabitants of pre-Israelite Canaan (Gen 14,5; 15,20; Deut 2,11, 20; 3,11; Josh 12,4; 17,15), sometimes as the inhabitants of the underworld. This latter meaning is found in Isa 12,9; 14,9; 26,19; Job 26,5; Prov 2,18; 9,18; 21,16; and in Isa 26,14 and Ps 88,11, where it parallels מתים, “the dead”. A connection to the dead is also suggested by a cognate which occurs on two Phoenician tombstones (KAI 13:8 and 14:8). Ugaritic also provides a cognate, and scholars have been quick to relate the biblical Rephaim to the Ugaritic *rp’um*, where the term recalls a special class of the dead, sometimes described as a cult of dead kings<sup>7</sup>. Since both meanings are operative in the Hebrew Bible — Rephaim as giants of a mythic past, and Rephaim as the inhabitants of the underworld — the question then becomes which value of Rephaim is presupposed by Deuteronomy 3. In connection with the giant proportions of Og’s bed, the former interpretation would seem the more obvious choice. However, as well as being the last of the Rephaim, Og reigns over various domains which some scholars have also connected to the afterlife. In the biblical account as we have it, nowhere is Bashan, or its capital cities Ashtoreth or Edrei, described as the domain of the dead — only with recourse to extra-biblical material can the connection be made. At Ugarit, Ashtoreth and Edrei are apparently connected to *rp’u mlk’lm*, “Rāpi’u, King of Eternity”, who *yṯb b’ttrt tṯt bhdr’y*, “sits enthroned in Ashtarot, judges in Hedrei”<sup>8</sup>. The correspondence between this image and the biblical tradition of Og has led some scholars to connect Og with the Ugaritic deity Rāpi’u, and as such to cast the character as the king of the dead (never mind that Og is described as the last of the Rephaim, rather than their king)<sup>9</sup>. On the other hand, Bashan is not mentioned in

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. J. GRAY, “The Rephaim”, *PRQ* 79 (1949) 127-139; C. L’HEUREUX, “The Ugaritic and the Biblical Rephaim”, *HTR* 67 (1974) 265-274; J.C. DE MOOR, “Rāpi’ūma — Rephaim”, *ZAW* 88 (1976) 323-345; H. ROUILLARD, “Rephaim”, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (ed. K. VAN DER TOORN — B. BECKING — P.W. VAN DER HORST) (Cambridge 1999) 692-700; and J. DAY, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (JSOTSup 265; Sheffield 2000) 217-225.

<sup>8</sup> KTU 1:108:1-3.

<sup>9</sup> See e.g. N. WYATT, “À la recherche des Rephaïm perdus”, *Le royaume d’Ougarit de la Crète à l’Euphrate* (ed. J.-M. MICHAUD) (Sherbrooke 2007) 579-613, here 589; K. VAN DER TOORN, “Funerary Rituals and Beatific Afterlife in Ugaritic Texts and in the Bible”, *BibOr* 48 (1991) 40-66; ROUILLARD, “Rephaim”, 697; and F. STAVRAKOPOULOU, *Land of Our Fathers. The Roles of Ancestor Veneration in Biblical Land Claims* (LHBOTS 473; London 2012) 68.

this context at Ugarit. In the Hebrew Bible, Bashan is often recalled in relation to its fertile aspect, and hence is variously linked with rams, goats, beasts, bulls, cows, and oaks (e.g. Deut 32,14; Ps 22,12; Isa 2,13; Ezek 27,6; 39,18; Zech 11,2; Amos 4,1). In Psalm 68, however, Bashan is recalled in a more mythopoeic guise: the mighty mountain which God apparently covets (v. 16)<sup>10</sup>; and in parallel to the “depths of the sea”, as an abode from which God can bring deliverance (v. 23):

אמר אדני  
מבשן אשיב  
אשיב ממצלות ים

The Lord said,  
“From Bashan I will bring them back,  
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea”.

Since Bashan appears here in parallel to the depths of the sea, which in Ugaritic religion was the abode of the sea god Yam, Bashan here may also be linked to a divine abode. Francesca Stavrakopoulou states her interpretation of the toponym in no uncertain terms: “Bashan is the netherworld, synonymous with ‘the land of the Rephaim’”<sup>11</sup>. And Og is the king of this domain: the discovery of a fifth-century Phoenician inscription from Byblos which apparently makes use of the character in the context of a funerary inscription would seem to clinch the case<sup>12</sup>. Og is related to the underworld — and the meaning of his over-large “bed” must be similarly construed.

Indeed, the translation of עַרְשׁ בְּרוֹל as “iron bed” is inherently unproblematic. בְּרוֹל is frequently attested with the meaning “iron” in the Hebrew Bible, while עַרְשׁ is found with the meaning “bed” or “couch” at Amos 3,12; 6,4; Pss 6,7; 41,3; 132,3; Job 7,13; Prov 7,16; and Song 1,16. However, if Og’s connection to the Rephaim is in their aspect as otherworldly inhabitants rather than as giants, the size of his over-large bed becomes rather awkward: what is the meaning of these unusual measurements and why have they been recorded in Deuteronomy 3? Thus the

<sup>10</sup> Although see I. KNOHL, “Psalm 68: Structure, Composition and Geography”, *JHS* 12 (2012) 1-21, who disputes any idea of coveting or rivalry between Mount Sinai and Mount Bashan.

<sup>11</sup> STAVRAKOPOULOU, *Land of Our Fathers*, 69; see also M. POPE, “The Cult of the Dead at Ugarit”, *Ugarit in Retrospect*. Fifty Years of Ugarit and Ugaritic (ed. G.D. YOUNG) (Winona Lake, IN 1981) 171; and G. DEL OLMO LETE, “Bašan o el “inferno” cananeo”, *SEL* 5 (1988) 51-60.

<sup>12</sup> So S. NOEGEL, “The Aegean Ogygos of Boeotia and the Biblical Og of Bashan: Reflections of the Same Myth”, *ZAW* 110 (1998) 411-426, here 417: “Og’s connection with tomb inscriptions [*sic*] and the Rephaim, the deceased wanderers of the underworld, is highly suggestive”.

problem is not one of *translation* but *interpretation*. Given Og's role as denizen of the underworld, could this reference to his "bed" or "couch" hide a metaphorical connection to a sarcophagus, tomb or grave? Scholars who have answered this question in the affirmative have usually done so by referring to Ps 6,7 and Amos 6,4, where ערש occurs in parallel with מטה, the latter lexeme which in 2 Sam 3,31 is used to refer to Abner's funerary bier. (Although when ערש is used in parallel with מטה in Ps 6,7 and Amos 6,4, both terms are used with the meaning "bed" or "couch", and never with any funerary connotations). Hence ערש could be understood as referring to a "sarcophagus"<sup>13</sup> or "grave"<sup>14</sup>. On the other hand, some scholars have found it problematic that this "sarcophagus" should be made of iron and not stone. Thus Timo Veijola has argued that ערש ברזל refers to a dolmen, a funerary monument<sup>15</sup>. In this case, the size of the ערש is not problematic after all, for these buildings were megalithic in structure (although why then provide the measurements at all?). Thus, according to this interpretation, Og is both the king of the underworld, and owner of large tomb or funerary monument, the latter of which continued to reside in the Ammonite capital following his defeat at the hands of the Israelites. This defeat then takes on a mythic symbolism in which the destruction of Og and his troops signifies not just the displacement of an enemy nation, but according to Stavrakopoulou, "the displacement of these underworld denizens from possession of the land"<sup>16</sup>. No less than a battle between the living and the dead is understood to stand behind the reference to Og and his bed in Deuteronomy 3.

## II. THE PLAIN SENSE INTERPRETATION: THE DEFEAT OF A GIANT

Not all commentators have followed in this interpretation of the ערש of Og as a tomb or sarcophagus. Alan R. Millard has argued that we should return to understanding the ערש ברזל literally: as an iron bed<sup>17</sup>. In this context, he has highlighted biblical references to beds and furniture inlaid with ivory (1 Kgs 10,18; 22,39; 2 Chr 9,17; Amos 6,4), and

<sup>13</sup> For example, P.C. CRAIGIE, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 1979) 120; and A.D.H. MAYES, *Deuteronomy* (NCB; Grand Rapids, MI 1981) 144.

<sup>14</sup> STAVRAKOPOULOU, *Land of Our Fathers*, 69.

<sup>15</sup> T. VEIJOLA, "King Og's Iron Bed (Deut. 3:11): Once Again", *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (eds. P.W. FLINT et al.) (VTS 101; Leiden 2003) 60-76.

<sup>16</sup> STAVRAKOPOULOU, *Land of Our Fathers*, 70.

<sup>17</sup> MILLARD, "King Og's Bed and Other Ancient Ironmongery", 481-492; ID, "King Og's Iron Bed: Fact or Fancy", 16-21, 55.

which have been substantiated by archaeological evidence of ivory overlays on wooden furniture from the Iron Age. Since iron was a valuable commodity during the Bronze Age, when the battle with Og is set, Millard argues that the reference to iron in Deuteronomy 3 reflects its use in purposes of adornment, akin to the later use of ivory inlays in luxury furniture and goods<sup>18</sup>. Millard has been followed in this interpretation by several recent commentators on the book of Deuteronomy<sup>19</sup>. In particular, Maria Lindquist has extended this argument by considering the function of the image of the iron bed in the narrative context of Deuteronomy's conquest account. Noting that the dimensions of Og's bed correspond to the bed of Marduk, a battle trophy and symbol of power in seventh-century Mesopotamia, Lindquist argues that the author of Deuteronomy is likening Og to a god and hence further dramatizing the defeat of this superhuman at the hands of Yhwh<sup>20</sup>.

Whatever one concludes about the plausibility of the connections Lindquist finds between Og's bed and the traditions of Marduk (and the size of Og's bed can perhaps be more securely related to the native Israelite tradition concerning the stature of the Rephaim), it seems certain that the size of the object described in Deut 3,11 serves to underscore the might of Og as a warrior figure — whether giant or god — and hence the success of the Israelite military machine: and this is certainly how the Og narrative is utilized when it crops up elsewhere in biblical tradition (e.g. Deut 29,7; Josh 2,10; 9,10; Pss 135,11; 136,19-20; Neh 9,22). Moreover, Millard's reading of עֶרֶשׁ בְּרוֹזַל as "iron bed" would seem to be the more obvious meaning of the term, one which is backed up with archaeological data from ancient Israel: as Millard himself succinctly notes, "An 'iron bed' in an ancient Near Eastern context, therefore, is surely to be understood as a bed adorned with iron"<sup>21</sup>. While I find Millard and Lindquist's arguments convincing with regard to their interpretation of עֶרֶשׁ בְּרוֹזַל, nevertheless neither scholar treats the mythological

<sup>18</sup> Although Millard argues in favour of dating Deuteronomy 3 far earlier than is usually allowed on this basis, I would prefer to understand the biblical author as having provided the detail of the iron as part of his historical fiction in couching his composition as the speech of Moses: the use of iron rather than ivory thus highlights the antiquity — and hence authority — of the tradition, rather than providing any insights into Bronze Age metallurgy.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. J.H. TIGAY, *Deuteronomy*. The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation (JPS Torah Commentary; Philadelphia, PA 1996) 35; M. WEINFELD, *Deuteronomy 1-11*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 5; New York 1991) 184; E. OTTO, *Deuteronomium 1-11* (HTKAT; Freiburg im Breisgau u.a. 2011) 469-470; and L. PERLITT, *Deuteronomium 1-6\** (BKAT 5.1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2013) 241.

<sup>20</sup> LINDQUIST, "King Og's Iron Bed", 480-481.

<sup>21</sup> MILLARD, "King Og's Bed and Other Ancient Ironmongery", 485.

associations which gave rise to the interpretation of ערש ברזל as “sarcophagus” or “grave” in the first place. Are these associations problematic for the reading of ערש as “bed”?

### III. THE MAKING OF A MYTH: UNPACKING THE DATA

Given all of the extra-biblical data which scholars have utilized in their interpretations of Og and his bed, it is not easy to clarify what exactly is understood by the reference to the character in Deuteronomy 3. Did the author wish to oppose Moses to death itself, as suggested by Stavrakopoulou<sup>22</sup>? In our review of the evidence which gave rise to this interpretation, three key interpretative strategies were noted: the connection between Og and the Rephaim, which in some biblical texts can be taken to mean the inhabitants of the underworld; the links between Bashan, Ashtoreth and Hedrei with Rāpi’u and the domain of the dead in the Ugaritic material and in Psalm 68; and the apparent reference to Og in a funerary inscription from Byblos. Yet when subjected to scrutiny, each of these items of evidence falls down.

Reading the text in Deuteronomy 3 itself, nothing would suggest any connection between Og and the underworld, save for the reference to the Rephaim — and elsewhere in Deuteronomy, the Rephaim are recalled in their connection to the giants who inhabited Canaan prior to the Israelite conquest (Deut 2,10-11). What does the author of Deuteronomy 3 understand by the term? The dual meaning of Rephaim in the Hebrew Bible may be reconciled by noting the temporal relationship between an author’s reference to the Rephaim, and his own epoch: when recalling the mythic past, the Rephaim are assumed to have been the giant inhabitants of Canaan before the arrival of the Israelites (the Bronze Age megalithic structures which survived the Bronze Age Collapse may have given rise to this belief). Their large stature presents these figures in royal terms (cf. 1 Sam 9,2). But in their own time, the biblical writers understand the Rephaim as a special kind of class of underworld inhabitants: thus, the Rephaim were once figures that lived long ago, but are now dead<sup>23</sup>. In the case of Deuteronomy 3,

<sup>22</sup> See also NOEGEL, “The Aegean Ogygos of Boeotia and the Biblical Og of Bashan”, 424: “when Moses slayed him [sc. Og], to some extent, he put down the chaotic forces of death”.

<sup>23</sup> M.J. SURIANO, *The Politics of Dead Kings*. Dynastic Ancestors in the Book of Kings and Ancient Israel (FAT 2.48; Tübingen 2010) 155, has shown that this is also the case of the *rp’um* at Ugarit: “The epic literature typically portrays the Rephaim in an active manner relative to the contemporary (living) characters of the storyline, be they gods or heroes [...]”.



it is exactly this mythic past which is being recalled. The description of Og as the last of the Rephaim, then, has a temporal effect, placing the characters in a distant past<sup>24</sup>. This is perfectly appropriate for the re-narration of the Numbers 21 story in the mouth of Moses, in a segment of the text which has largely been understood akin to the historical prologue found in the contemporary Neo-Assyrian treaties<sup>25</sup>. In Deuteronomy 3, Og is the last of the giant inhabitants of Canaan, and not a denizen of the dead.

What of the links between the domains of Og in Bashan, Ashtoreth, and Edrei, and their associations to the underworld? While Og himself may be a giant, did this giant rule over netherworldly locations? Yet the interpretation of the Ugaritic text which has been frequently cited in the literature as connecting “Rāpi’u, King of Eternity” with Ashtoreth and Edrei, and hence these locations with the underworld, is not as straightforward as many of the commentators seem to have supposed. The issue relates to the interpretation and vocalization of the consonantal Ugaritic script: there are actually two ways of reading the text in question (KTU 1:108:1-3). B. Margulis was the first to suggest connecting *ʾttrt* and *hḏr’y* from this text with the Og story, and hence interpreting these lexemes as the toponyms Ashtoreth and (H)edrei known from the Hebrew Bible<sup>26</sup> — and this interpretation has been jumped upon by those scholars who wish to interpret Og as a chthonic deity, a rather circular argument, given that it was the Og story which gave rise to Margulis’s interpretation in the first place. But subsequent Ugaritologists have rejected this reading<sup>27</sup>: the translation preferred by the majority of Ugaritologists reads these lexemes not as toponyms, but as divine names, *Attartu* and *Haddu*<sup>28</sup>. In this case, KTU 1:108:1-3 provides additional information concerning the god Rāpi’u

The concept of ancestry at work in the epic literature relates directly to one of mythic time, a period in the distant past when the long dead once lived. Thus, the Rephaim played a role as temporal fixtures of Ugarit’s mythic history”.

<sup>24</sup> SURIANO, *The Politics of Dead Kings*, 159. So also ROUILLARD, “Rephaim”, 695-697.

<sup>25</sup> Contra A. ROFÉ, *La composizione del Pentateuco*. Un’introduzione (Studi biblici 35; Bologna 1999) 128-129, who argues that the account in Deuteronomy is the original version of the tale and the Numbers version dependent upon it, as Marc Zvi Brettler has pointed out, the version in Numbers lacks Deuteronomistic phraseology, “which would be expected if it originated from Deuteronomy”: M.Z. BRETTLER, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (New York 1995) 75.

<sup>26</sup> B. MARGULIS, “A Ugaritic Psalm (RŠ 24.252)”, *JBL* 89 (1970) 292-304; followed by ROUILLARD, “Rephaim”, 694.

<sup>27</sup> See the objections raised by P.J. VAN ZIJL, *Baal. A Study of Texts in Connection with Baal in the Ugaritic Epics* (AOAT 10; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1972) 363; A.J. FERRARA – S.B. PARKER, “Seating Arrangements at Divine Banquets”, *UF* 4 (1972) 37-39; and M. GÖRG, “Noch einmal: ederi in Ugarit?”, *UF* 6 (1974) 474-475.

<sup>28</sup> See e.g. DE MOOR, “Rāpi’ūma – Rephaim”, 326-327.



which exactly fits with other traditions known from ancient Canaan: thus, Rāpi'u is the god who *yṯb b'ttrt*, "thrones with Attartu", the latter being a perfect partner in judgment because she was thought to execute divine revenge<sup>29</sup>. Rāpi'u also *tpt bhd r'y*, "judges with Haddu, the shepherd", the latter being a well attested epithet for Adad<sup>30</sup>, who in both Akkadian and Ugaritic sources is frequently depicted as a judge<sup>31</sup>. Indeed, there is an additional problem with reading the lexemes according to the biblical toponyms. While initial [h] can certainly occur as ['] in Ugaritic<sup>32</sup>, the fact that this reading would see Edrei begin with ['] but *hḏr'y* with [h] is problematic<sup>33</sup>. To read KTU 1:108:1-3 as connecting Rāpi'u with the biblical toponyms Ashtoreth and Edrei is to read the text against the weight of the evidence, and against the majority of the commentators of the text. Nevertheless, Margulis's original reading persists in biblical scholarship, precisely because it has allowed the Og story to be connected with weighty mythological symbolism.

The same is true for Psalm 68, which has also confounded scholarly interpretation. Even the reference made to Bashan by the Psalm has been disputed, with some commentators connecting the lexeme בָּשָׁן in v. 23 not to the toponym, but as a reference to a snake or viper. In this case, the lexeme in question must be interpreted as a cognate to Ugaritic *bṯn*, "snake" (proto-Semitic /t/ being represented in Hebrew script by the letter [š]), and v. 22 subsequently translated: "From the hole of the snake, I will bring you back // I will bring you back from the depths of the sea"<sup>34</sup>. Certainly, this interpretation is somewhat fanciful: the Psalm refers to Bashan twice more in v. 16, and here the interpretation of the geographic location is necessary, given that the "mountains" of Bashan are referred to. Indeed, John Day has made the case that Bashan may well be connected to the mountain of the gods in Ps 68,16.23. Nevertheless, he still concludes that despite this mythological coloring, Bashan is never attributed a netherworldly locale either in biblical or extra-biblical literature<sup>35</sup>. While Bashan may be the land of Og — and even the mountain of the

<sup>29</sup> J.C. DE MOOR, *New Year with Canaanites and Israelites* (Kampen 1972) II:25, n. 106.

<sup>30</sup> J.J. STAMM, *Die akkadische Namengebung* (MVAeG 44; Leipzig 1939), 214.

<sup>31</sup> DE MOOR, "Rāpi'ūma – Rephaim", 327.

<sup>32</sup> See E.L. GREENSTEIN, "Another Attestation of Initial *h > ' in West Semitic*", *JANES* 5 (1973) 162, n. 31.

<sup>33</sup> J. DAY, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea. Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge 1985) 163.

<sup>34</sup> F.C. FENSHAM, "Ps. 68:23 in Light of the Recently Discovered Ugaritic Tablets", *JNES* 19 (1960) 292-293.

<sup>35</sup> DAY, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea*, 113-119.

gods in some traditions — it is not the location of the underworld in any of the extant textual sources.

The final puzzle piece utilized in the characterization of Og as a chthonic deity relates to the occurrence of the character in a Phoenician tomb inscription from fifth-century Byblos. According to the interpretation of Gregorio del Olmo Lete, Og occurs in this inscription as a Phoenician deity, the protector of tombs<sup>36</sup>. Del Olmo Lete based this statement on the interpretation of Marvin Pope<sup>37</sup>, which was in turn based on the text and discussion of the inscription provided by Wolfgang Röllig<sup>38</sup>. Subsequently, this interpretation of Pope and del Olmo Lete has become something of a truism in the literature, and Og's appearance in this inscription has been frequently referenced in connection to his chthonic aspect<sup>39</sup>. Scott Noegel even writes of "tomb inscriptions" in the plural which apparently refer to Og, although he can only reference the same (singular) inscription listed by the other scholars<sup>40</sup>. However, like the Ugaritic material which was employed in order to relate Ashtoreth and Edrei to Rāpi'u, this interpretative strategy rests on similarly shaky philological grounds<sup>41</sup>. Though unacknowledged in the subsequent literature, already in 1979 Frank Moore Cross disputed the reading of the inscriptional evidence, denying the reference to Og at all<sup>42</sup>. Indeed, even in the initial publications of the inscription by Jean Starcky and later by Röllig, there was a dispute concerning the reading of the relevant lines, with Starcky providing the initial transcription and translation: *lpth ']lt 'rn zn wlrgz 'šmy h'g ytbqšn h'dr*

<sup>36</sup> G. DEL OLMO LETE, "Og", *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (eds. K. VAN DER TOORN – B. BECKING – P.W. VAN DER HORST) (Cambridge 1999) 638.

<sup>37</sup> POPE, "The Cult of the Dead at Ugarit".

<sup>38</sup> W. RÖLLIG, "Eine neue phönizische Inschrift aus Byblos", *Neue Ephemeris für Semitische Epigraphik* (eds. R. DEGEN – W.W. MÜLLER – W. RÖLLIG) (Wiesbaden 1972) II:2-4; cf. J. STARCKY, "Une inscription phénicienne de Byblos", *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 45 (1969) 259-273, pl. 1. See now also KAI 280:2, where Röllig has completely revised his original interpretation.

<sup>39</sup> See e.g. G.C. HEIDER, *The Cult of Molek. A Reassessment* (JSOTSup 43; Sheffield 1985) 396; K. SPRONK, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East* (AOAT 219; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986) 210-211; S. BØE, *Gog and Magog. Ezekiel 38–39 as Pre-Text for Revelation 19,17-21 and 20,7-10* (WUNT II.135; Tübingen 2001) 60; J.R. LUNDBOM, *Deuteronomy. A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI 2013) 201; and T.B. DOZEMAN, *Joshua 1-12. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AYB 6B; New Haven, CT 2015) 498.

<sup>40</sup> NOEGEL, "The Aegean Ogygos of Boeotia and the Biblical Og of Bashan", 417.

<sup>41</sup> See the comments made by J. HOFTUIZER – K. JONGELING, *Dictionary of North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (Leiden 1995) 824.

<sup>42</sup> F.M. CROSS, "A Recently Published Phoenician Inscription of the Persian Period from Byblos", *IEJ* 29 (1979) 40-44; reprinted with an addendum in Id., *Leaves from an Epigrapher's Notebook*. Collected Papers in Hebrew and West Semitic Palaeography and Epigraphy (HSS 51; Winona Lake, IN 2003) 282-285.

*wbkl d...*, “...pour ouvrir] ce sarcophage et pour troubler mes os, le ‘Og me cherchera, le Puissant, et dans tout...”<sup>43</sup>. Yet as noted by Röllig, the syntax of the article *h’g* would be odd in Phoenician if *’g* be understood as a personal name<sup>44</sup>. Cross raised further problems: *ythqš* does not exist in Canaanite — and even if it did, it would be reflexive and intransitive, making the suffix *-n* a further anomaly. *h’dr*, on the other hand, is better understood as a shortened form of Ba‘l ‘Addīr, elsewhere found in precisely the same contexts, where the article is used as a vocative participle (KAI 9 B:5). Thus Cross proposed a new reading for the inscription, reading ‘*šmy* (feminine plural with suffix) followed by *h’gzt*, with no space following the gimel<sup>45</sup>, and hence entirely removing any reference to Og: *w’m kl ‘dm ybqš lpth ‘lt ‘rn zn wlrz ‘šmy h’gzt bqšn h’dr wbkl dr [bn ‘lm*, “[...and if anyone seeks to open] this sarcophagus or to disturb my molding bones, seek him out O (Ba‘l) Addīr and with all the assembly [of the gods [...]]”<sup>46</sup>. This reading is to be preferred since it alleviates the syntactical difficulty of the proposed reading *h’g* (the Og?), and moreover parallels Phoenician funerary texts from similar contexts, such as Shipitbaal (KAI 9), Tabnit (KAI 13), and Eshmunazor (KAI 14), which provide standard formulae concerning the opening of a sarcophagus and disturbing the bones. Indeed, Wolfgang Röllig, whom Marvin Pope drew upon in his original statement of the connection between Og and this inscription, has recently revised his original opinion, removing any reference to Og in the fifth edition of his influential *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*<sup>47</sup>. Yet the commentators we have explored above have failed to acknowledge Cross’s re-reading of the inscription, or even to note the problems with the initial reading as discussed in the early transcriptions and commentaries of Starcky and Röllig. Instead, Og’s appearance on the tombstone has been taken for granted, and used in order to further relate the character to a funerary context.

At some point in the history of scholarship, it became a commonplace to link King Og of Bashan to the underworld, and hence to understand the king as no less than a chthonic deity, akin to the Ugaritic Rāpi‘u; his country Bashan as the “Canaanite Hell, or more exactly, the Elysian

<sup>43</sup> STARCKY, “Une inscription phénicienne de Byblos”, 262.

<sup>44</sup> RÖLLIG, “Eine neue phönizische Inschrift aus Byblos”. Röllig’s translation of the slightly emended text reads: “[...zu öffnen ü[ber diesem Sarkophag und zu stören meine Gebeine, der mächtige Og wird mich rächen und unter allen Gesch[lechtern...]”

<sup>45</sup> The inscription is damaged at this point, while the spacing is uneven; see the description in CROSS, “A Recently Published Phoenician Inscription”, 42.

<sup>46</sup> CROSS, “A Recently Published Phoenician Inscription”, 41.

<sup>47</sup> KAI 280.

Fields”<sup>48</sup>; and his iron bed as a “sarcophagus” or “coffin”. And this is in spite of the biblical evidence itself: neither Og nor Bashan are ever connected to a netherworldly context in the Hebrew Bible, nor does the reference to his ערש ברזל require any special philological attention, given the well attested uses of these terms to mean “bed” and “iron” in the biblical text. Instead, scholars have had to make recourse to data from diverse geographical and temporal locations, encompassing Ugaritic and Phoenician material in order to connect King Og to the chthonic domain. Yet as we have seen, frequently this has been done without full understanding of the inscriptional evidence and its philological and interpretative problems. When subjected to scrutiny, each of the evidences used to connect either Og or his homelands in Bashan, Ashtoreth and Edrei to the afterlife falls down. Instead, Deuteronomy 3 recalls the tradition of Og in order to underscore the military power of the Israelite army. Both the size of his bed and its overlay with precious metal, as well as the description of Og as the last of the Rephaim, serve to heighten this dramatic narrative: Og and his bed are part of the mythic past, a mighty foe, one of the giants of old, whom Israel was nevertheless able to defeat. The depiction of this battle as a defeat of death itself is a modern myth, a construct of scholarship. The author of Deuteronomy 3 and his ancient audience would not have recognized the chthonic king or his symbolic tomb so often reconstructed by modern commentators: these scholarly excesses must finally be laid to rest, and with them Og, into his iron bed.

Department of Religion  
1879 Hall  
Washington Road  
Princeton, NJ 08544  
U.S.A.

Laura QUICK

#### SUMMARY

This paper explores the interpretative decisions which have allowed commentators to connect King Og and his iron bed in Deuteronomy 3 to the underworld, and hence to interpret Og as an underworld deity and his iron bed as a sarcophagus or tomb. Ultimately, it is shown that this interpretation rests on an insufficient understanding of the extra-biblical sources, while the Bible itself never connects Og to a chthonic context. The interpretation of Og as an underworld deity is thus a scholarly construct which must be laid to rest, and with it Og, into his iron bed.

<sup>48</sup> DEL OLMO LETE, “Og”, 639.

## TRITO-ISAIAH AND THE REFORMS OF EZRA/NEHEMIAH: CONSENT OR CONFLICT?

### I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS <sup>1</sup>

In the last decades, studies on Trito-Isaiah mainly focused on the relationship between the last section of the Book of Isaiah and the two preceding main parts. Trito-Isaiah was identified as Deutero-Isaiah's disciple <sup>2</sup>, as interpreter of Proto- as well as Deutero-Isaiah <sup>3</sup> or as reader and redactor of the whole book <sup>4</sup>. According to Steck <sup>5</sup> Trito-Isaiah never existed as an individual book. Rather, it was originally written to function as a *Fort-schreibung* to the Book of Isaiah *in statu nascendi*.

Regardless of this variety of positions two points are well assured: First, Trito-Isaiah concludes the Book of Isaiah as a whole and second, the intention of Trito-Isaiah cannot be adequately determined without taking into account the goal of the entire Book of Isaiah <sup>6</sup>. What are thus the core elements of this prophetic book? Among others, the holiness of YHWH and Zion/Jerusalem, the servant Jacob/Israel and his witness to the exclusive divinity of YHWH as well as the admission of the peoples to the veneration of Israel's God. There may be further aspects, but these elements are essential in order to conceive the overall message of the Book of Isaiah <sup>7</sup>.

Up to this point, there seems a general agreement in scholarship, but another crucial question arises: If Trito-Isaiah cannot be understood in isolation from the rest of the book and if the Book of Isaiah as a whole is characterized by those core elements, how does Trito-Isaiah along with

<sup>1</sup> Ulrich Berges is Professor for Old Testament (Bonn, Germany) and extra-ordinary professor in the Department of Old Testament Studies (University of Pretoria).

<sup>2</sup> K. ELLIGER, *Die Einheit des Tritojesaja (Jesaja 56-66)* (BWANT 45; Stuttgart 1928); P.-É. BONNARD, *Le Second Isaïe, son disciple et leurs éditeurs*. Isaïe 40-66 (Paris 1972).

<sup>3</sup> W.A.M. BEUKEN, *Jesaja deel III<sup>A</sup>* (De Prediking van het Oude Testament; Nijkerk 1989); J. VERMEYLEN, «L'unité du livre d'Isaïe», *The Book of Isaiah* (ed. J. VERMEYLEN) (BETL 81; Leuven 1989) 11-53.

<sup>4</sup> Esp. J. STROMBERG, *Isaiah After Exile*. The Author of Third Isaiah as Reader and Redactor of the Book (Oxford 2011).

<sup>5</sup> O.H. STECK, *Studien zu Tritojesaja* (BZAW 203; Berlin 1991).

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., B. SCHRAMM, *The Opponents of Third-Isaiah*. Reconstructing the Cultic History of the Restoration (JSOTSS 193; Sheffield 1995) 51: to analyze Trito-Isaiah apart from the rest of the book would be «inadequate [...] misleading».

<sup>7</sup> Cf. U. BERGES – W.A.M. BEUKEN, *Jesaja*. Eine Einführung (Göttingen 2016) 35-51.

the overall message of the book fit in the historical situation of Jerusalem/Jehud at the end of the 6th up to at least the end of the 5th century B.C.E.? This is an important question since undoubtedly the so-called Trito-Isaianic chapters *grosso modo* originate in the 5th century which is also the most influential formative phase of the entire book.

Against this background, it surprises how little attention has been paid so far especially in German speaking exegesis to the close interdependency with the historical context<sup>8</sup>. By contrast, the problems concerning the history of the composition and redaction of Trito-Isaiah have been discussed very intensively. Since most of the efforts were reduced to the question, to what extent Trito-Isaiah should be considered as a disciple of Deutero-Isaiah and/or as redactor of the entire book, a proper socio-historical contextualization did not take place<sup>9</sup>.

The socio-cultural context comes into view only under the premise that the Book of Isaiah is not an *œuvre* of a prophetic individual but the product of a group or groups of scribes. Continuing this line of thought, the so-called reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah could serve as a major point of comparison to clarify what aims the scribes of the final stages of the Book of Isaiah did pursue.

The alternative position that Trito-Isaiah does not deal at all with contemporary events of that time is very unlikely since the terminological correspondence (such as חרדים [tremblers] in Isa 66,2.5 and Ezra 9,4; 10,3) as well as the concept of זרע הקדש (holy seed, cf. Isa 6,13; Ezra 9,2) is hardly mere coincidence. The same applies to the combination of בָּדֵל «separate» with בֶּן נָכָר «(son of a) foreigner» in Isa 56,3 and Ezra 10,11 (cf. Neh 10,29; Lev 20,22-26)<sup>10</sup>.

For the following argumentation it is of little significance whether the earlier or later chronology is accepted (Ezra under Artaxerxes I. [458 B.C.E.] or under Artaxerxes II. [398 B.C.E.]) or how much historical information we are able to derive from these books<sup>11</sup>. The main question will be whether

<sup>8</sup> Important references are provided by L. RUSZKOWSKI, *Volk und Gemeinde im Wandel*. Eine Untersuchung zu Jesaja 56–66 (FRLANT 191; Göttingen 2000) 153–170.

<sup>9</sup> To a lesser extent this is also true for non-German-speaking scholarship on Trito-Isaiah. A number of studies on the history of postexilic era do not deal with the Trito-Isaianic chapters, cf., e.g., D.V. EDELMAN, *Origins of the «Second» Temple*. Persian Imperial Policy and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem (Bible World; London 2005).

<sup>10</sup> Thus C. NIHAN, «L'histoire rédactionnelle du «Trito-Esaïe». Un essai de synthèse», *Les recueils prophétiques de la Bible*. Origines, milieux, et contexte proche-oriental (éds. J.-D. MACCHI *et al.*) (Le monde de la Bible 64; Genève 2012) 201–228, 225 n. 67.

<sup>11</sup> The reasoning of Morton Smith concerning the priority of Ezra over Nehemiah is still worth considering; cf. M. SMITH, *Palestinian Parties and Politics that Shaped the Old Testament* (London<sup>2</sup>1987) 91–97; cf. also J. BLENKINSOPP, *Ezra-Nehemiah* (OTL; Philadelphia 1988) 139–144: Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem 458 B.C.E.; Nehemiah's in 445 B.C.E. Grabbe

Trito-Isaiah, and thus the Book of Isaiah as a whole, has to be read and understood as a plea in favour of or as a counterproposal to the policy pursued by the two Jewish officials of the Persian Empire.

As Rothenbusch pointed out, the initiative taken by these two individuals did not emanate from the Persians authorities, but from the leaders of the Babylonian Golah.

While Nehemiah's activities cannot be sufficiently explained against the backdrop of an instruction as Persian official, it is even less probable in the case of Ezra. The Ezra account does not indicate that his service is to be understood as a political or official mission in terms of Persian politics. Rather, we have to assume that Ezra was the exponent of a project privileged and authorized by the Babylonian diaspora which was supported by the Persian court <sup>12</sup>.

## II. THE STATUS OF CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP:

### TWO OPPOSING POSITIONS

#### 1. *Trito-Isaiah in favour of Ezra's/Nehemiah's reforms*

One of the main proponents of this position is Marvin Sweeney. In many publications <sup>13</sup> he corroborates his opinion by pointing out that:

- a. Both Trito-Isaiah/the Book of Isaiah as well as Ezra/Nehemiah are globally oriented <sup>14</sup>.
- b. In Ezra/Nehemiah as in Trito-Isaiah the temple plays a major role.

maintains the opposite standpoint, cf. L.L. GRABBE, «Penetrating the Legend. In Quest of the Historical Ezra», *Open-Mindedness in the Bible and Beyond*. Festschrift Bob Becking (eds. L.L. GRABBE – M.C.A. KORPEL) (LHBOTS 616; London 2015) 97-110; summarizing the different positions C. FREVEL, *Geschichte Israels* (Stuttgart 2016) 310-317.

<sup>12</sup> R. ROTHENBUSCH, «...abgesondert zur Tora Gottes hin». *Ethnisch-religiöse Identitäten im Ezra/Nehemiabuch* (HBS 70; Stuttgart 2012) 312 (English translation by the author of this article).

<sup>13</sup> M.A. SWEENEY, *Isaiah 1-39*. With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature (FOTL 16; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 60; M.A. SWEENEY, «The Book of Isaiah as Prophetic Torah», *New Visions of Isaiah* (eds. M.A. SWEENEY – R.F. MELUGIN) (JSOTSS 214; Sheffield 1996) 50-67; see also M.A. SWEENEY, «Reconceptualization of the Davidic Covenant», *Studies in the Book of Isaiah*. Festschrift W.A.M. Beuken (eds. J. VAN RUITEN – M. VERVENNE) (BETL 132; Leuven 1997) 41-61; and recently M.A. SWEENEY, *Isaiah 40-66* (FOTL 19; Grand Rapids, MI 2016) 28-30.

<sup>14</sup> T. WILLI, «Leviten, Priester und Kult in vorhellenistischer Zeit. Die chronistische Optik in ihrem geschichtlichen Kontext», *Israel und die Völker*. Studien zur Literatur und Geschichte Israels in der Perserzeit (ed. T. WILLI) (SBAB 55; Stuttgart 2012) 48-70, 56, also vehemently argues in favour of a broad horizon behind Ezra/Nehemiah as well as the Books of Chronicles. He refers to Ezra/Nehemiah as historicized prophecy («historisierte Prophetie») or as historiography from a prophetic perspective.



- c. The separation between the wicked and the righteous is not only important to Trito-Isaiah and the Book of Isaiah as a whole (cf. Isaiah 65–66; 1,27-28), but is also a main concern in Ezra/Nehemiah (cf. esp. Nehemiah 5).
- d. The dissolution of intermarriages in Ezra/Nehemiah does not contradict the admission of foreigners in Isa 56,1-8 because the Book of Isaiah does not deal with marital matters at all. And as far as the relation towards Gentiles is concerned, Ezra and Nehemiah do not explicitly object to conversions of foreigners to YHWH's cult in Jerusalem <sup>15</sup>.
- e. The parallel of חרדים/חרד in Isa 66,2.5 and Ezra 9,4; 10,3 is a clear evidence to the fact that the authors of Trito-Isaiah support Ezra's reform program. The admonition in both books to keep the Sabbath (Isa 56,2.6; 58,13-14; Neh 9,14; 10,31; 13,15-22) points to a shared adherence to the Torah.
- f. If the expression זרע הקדש in Ezra 9,2 is indeed borrowed from Isa 6,13 and the theological concept of the «rest» in Ezra 9,8 is drawn from the Book of Isaiah (cf. Isa 4,3; 10,20; 37,31-32), these connections have to be interpreted as fulfillment of the Isaianic prophecies.
- g. Ezra's return to Jerusalem is portrayed as a second Exodus based on the model of the Book of Isaiah (thus also Koch and McConville <sup>16</sup>). The solemn proclamation of the Torah on Sukkot appears to be an ingenious combination of two Isaianic motives, i.e. «harvest» and «way» (cf. Isa 11,11-16; 27,12-13; 35,8-10; 40,1-11; 62,10-12).

Based on these observations, Sweeney draws the following conclusion: «The final form of the book of Isaiah is best understood as the product of a mid-5<sup>th</sup>-to early-4<sup>th</sup>-century redaction that was designed to support Nehemiah's and Ezra's efforts to restore Jerusalem and the temple as the holy center of Judaism and creation at large» <sup>17</sup>. The Mosaic Torah pushes forward Ezra's reform *ad intra* whereas the Isaianic Torah is directed *ad extra*, i.e. towards the nations. Both define Israel as a holy people: «Both therefore serve the ends of Ezra's reforms, insofar as the goal of the program was to reestablish Israel as a holy community in Jerusalem» <sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> SCHRAMM, *Opponents*, 61 n. 2: «Isa. 56.1–8, like Ezra and Nehemiah, sets up criteria by which foreigners may be allowed to participate in the cult. This, however, is something very different from «universalism»».

<sup>16</sup> K. KOCH, «Ezra and the Origins of Judaism», *JSST* 19 (1974) 173-197; J.G. MCCONVILLE, «Ezra-Nehemiah and the Fulfilment of Prophecy», *VT* 36 (1986) 205-224.

<sup>17</sup> SWEENEY, *Isaiah 40–66*, 29-30.

<sup>18</sup> SWEENEY, «The Book of Isaiah as Prophetic Tora», 27.

Even though taking a completely different approach, Vermeylen comes to a very similar conclusion: The three main concerns of Ezra and Nehemiah (reconstruction of the city wall, repopulation, ethical and religious realignment) are also present in Trito-Isaiah. According to Vermeylen, the Trito-Isaianic redactor not only combined Proto- and Deutero-Isaiah in the times of Nehemiah (around 445 B.C.E.) but also added Isaiah 56–66 as a climax in accordance with the policy of the Persian official Nehemiah (and Ezra) <sup>19</sup>. This is not surprising since already Deutero-Isaiah had tried to «convince the opponents to align themselves with the new Persian regime» <sup>20</sup>.

## 2. *Trito-Isaiah in opposition to Ezra/Nehemiah*

It is well known that Paul Hanson is one of the main proponents of this position. According to him, the eschatologically oriented authors fought a fierce struggle against the Zadokite priests in postexilic Jerusalem. Hanson's suggestion is «that disenfranchised Levites allied themselves with the visionary followers of Second Isaiah in a coalition dedicated to a restoration of the Jerusalem cult along non-Zadokite lines» <sup>21</sup>. There has been a lot of criticism concerning Hanson's all too stereotyped contrast between eschatological freethinkers and ultra conservative theocrats <sup>22</sup>. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that there is a struggle in Trito-Isaiah that escalates in chaps. 65–66.

Unlike Hanson, Herbert Donner does not raise any ideological suspicion. According to him, Isa 56,1-8 constitutes an abrogation of the restricted admission of foreigners in Deuteronomy 23. Thus, the text stands in direct opposition to Ezra and Nehemiah. As Donner puts it:

When the prophet [Trito-Isaiah] proclaims the affiliation of non-Israelites and eunuchs to the temple community in Jerusalem in the name of YHWH he not only is in contradiction to the *modus operandi* concerning foreigners and intermarriages but also overrules Dt. xxiii 2-9 in the name of YHWH. He does so in the light of the eschaton <for my salvation is near to come,

<sup>19</sup> J. VERMEYLEN, «L'unité du livre d'Isaïe», 53: «l'œuvre écrite par laquelle le rédacteur du temps de Néhémie prolonge sa réflexion à partir d'Is 1–55».

<sup>20</sup> J. VERMEYLEN, «L'unité du livre d'Isaïe», 41: «convaincre des opposants à se rallier au nouveau régime perse».

<sup>21</sup> P.D. HANSON, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, PA 1975) 225.

<sup>22</sup> P. ACKROYD, «Apocalyptic in Its Social Setting», *Int* 30 (1976) 412-415; R.P. CARROLL, «Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic?», *JSOT* 14 (1979) 3-35. The criticism still continues, cf. J. GOLDINGAY, «About Third Isaiah...», *On Stone and Scroll*. Festschrift G.I. Davies (eds. J.K. AITKEN *et al.*) (BZAW 420; Berlin 2011) 375-389, 382: «Importing an interpretation into the text from his sociological model seems to be what Hanson does».

and my righteousness to be revealed» (V.1b). On the verge of the eschaton the community changes its shape: The community constituted by blood becomes a community of confession whose members are recognized by their observance of the Law, especially the keeping of the Sabbath <sup>23</sup>.

Different to Sweeney, Donner sees a connection between the admission of foreigners and the issue of intermarriages. Furthermore, Crüsemann underlines that the dissolution of intermarriages does not seem to indicate a willingness to admit foreigners into the community <sup>24</sup>. In addition, the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah do not witness any inclusion of foreigners. Nevertheless, Crüsemann rejects the antagonism «theocracy vs. eschatology» maintained by Hanson and Plöger since the central point of controversy is not a cultic agenda, but a struggle concerning social justice <sup>25</sup>. According to Crüsemann, Nehemiah as proponent of small, independent peasants and of the minor cultic personnel opposes the local aristocracy and the high priesthood <sup>26</sup>. In addition, all efforts to more narrowly identify the tradents of the prophetic books currently lead only to vague descriptions like «conventicle, marginalized groups, parts of the under-class and intellectuals» <sup>27</sup>.

### III. A NEW STARTING POINT: PARALLELS AND DIFFERENCES

Since both positions described above are based on correct observations the solution to the problem cannot be found on one side alone. The main task therefore is to explain both, the parallels as well as the differences between Trito-Isaiah and Ezra/Nehemiah. These books and their tradents are on the one hand closely related, on the other hand they differ in important issues. In my view, some common roots shared by the literary accounts would best explain the aggressive tone (cf. Isa 56,9 – 57,13) which at the end of the Book of Isaiah changes into open hostility.

<sup>23</sup> H. DONNER, «Jesaja LVI 1–7. Ein Abrogationsfall innerhalb des Kanons — Implikationen und Konsequenzen», *Congress Volume Salamanca 1983* (ed. J.A. EMERTON) (VTS 36; Leiden 1985) 81–95, 87 (English translation by the author of this article).

<sup>24</sup> F. CRÜSEMANN, «Israel in der Perserzeit. Eine Skizze in Auseinandersetzung mit Max Weber», *Max Webers Sicht des Antiken Christentums. Interpretation und Kritik* (ed. W. SCHLUCHTER) (Frankfurt/Main 1985) 205–232, 209; cf. 210: «Ancient regulations concerning endogamy were aggravated in the Exile and are now fixed ostentatiously».

<sup>25</sup> J. BLENKINSOPP, *Isaiah 56–66* (AB 19B; Doubleday, NY 2003) 139–140 points to the fact that the admission to the temple cult in Jerusalem was closely related to the social status, including the entitlement to property.

<sup>26</sup> CRÜSEMANN, «Israel in der Perserzeit», 213.

<sup>27</sup> CRÜSEMANN, «Israel in der Perserzeit», 219: «Konventikel, marginalisierte Gruppen, Teile der Unterschicht und der Intellektuellen».

Arguably, the similarities are the result of a shared provenance from the Babylonian diaspora. Both, Ezra/Nehemiah and their proponents as well as the *literati* of Trito-Isaiah who at the same time are responsible for the final form of the Book of Isaiah came from the Golah or had strong connections to the Babylonian diaspora<sup>28</sup>. Yet, the exilic community and its descendants were far from being a homogenous group<sup>29</sup>. To give an example: In Ezekiel's view the only in-group are the exiles who had been deported in 597 B.C.E.<sup>30</sup>. The tradents of Deutero-Isaiah seem not to have come to Babel until 587. The longing for a restauration of Zion/ Jerusalem presupposes the experience of destruction (cf. 40,1-3.9-11; 42,22-25; 43,25-28; 44,26-28).

A clear indication for the proximity of Ezra/Nehemiah and the Isaiah-Group is the notion «tremblers» (חרדים) which is found only in Ezra 9,4; 10,3 und Isa 66,2.5. Since the term is a self-designation — like «holy seed» or «servants» — it is charged with specific claims. According to Blenkinsopp, these claims are made by the same group probably over a longer period of time<sup>31</sup>. But this is not the only possibility: Alternatively, different groups could have used the same terminology. In that case one group would tremble before the Mosaic word, the other before the prophetic word of Isaiah<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> J. WERLITZ, *Redaktion und Komposition*. Zur Rückfrage hinter die Endgestalt von Jesaja 40–55 (BBB 122; Berlin 1999) 321-323; U. BERGES, *Jesaja 40–48* (HThKAT; Freiburg 2008) 43-45; H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, «The Setting of Deutero-Isaiah. Some Linguistic Considerations», *Exile and Return*. The Babylonian Context (eds. J. STÖKL – C. WAERZEGGERS) (BZAW 478; Berlin 2015) 253-267; in contrast to H.M. BARSTAD, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah*. «Exilic» Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40–55 (Oslo 1997) 77-87; L.-S. TIEMEYER, *For the Comfort of Zion*. The Geographical and Theological Location of Isaiah 40–55 (VTS 139; Leiden 2011) 58-75.

<sup>29</sup> D. ROM-SHILONI, *Exclusive Inclusivity*. Identity Conflict between the Exiles and the People Who Remained (6th-5th Centuries BCE) (LHBOTS 543; London 2013) 99-136; ID., «From Ezekiel to Ezra-Nehemiah. Shifts of Group Identities within Babylonian Exilic Ideology», *Judah and Judeans in the Achaemenid Period*. Negotiating Identity in an International Context (eds. O. LIPSCHITS *et al.*) (Winona Lake, IN 2011) 127-151.

<sup>30</sup> K.-F. POHLMANN, *Der Prophet Hesekiel (Ezechiel)*. Kapitel 1-19 (ATD 22,1; Göttingen 1996) 27-28.

<sup>31</sup> Thus, e.g., J. BLENKINSOPP, *Judaism, the First Phase*. The Place of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Origins of Judaism (Grand Rapids, MI 2009) 35; J. BLENKINSOPP, «The Development of Jewish Sectarianism from Nehemiah to the Hasidim», *Judah and Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (eds. O. LIPSCHITS *et al.*) (Winona Lake, IN 2011) 385-404, 395: «the same entity from different perspectives and probably also different stages of development».

<sup>32</sup> J. MIDDLEMAS, «Trito-Isaiah's Intra- and Internationalization. Identity Markers in the Second Temple Period», *Judah and Judeans*, 105-125, 123, points out that the term «the humble and contrite in spirit» is attested only in Isa 66,2. Either the term «tremblers» was a common expression at that time or Ezra incorporated several ideas from Trito-Isaiah while neglecting others.

If the authors of Trito-Isaiah were indeed a group of Levitical singers and poets who had been deported in 587 B.C.E. and returned to Judah/Jerusalem in several waves of remigration<sup>33</sup>, this historical context would constitute a perfect frame to understand both, the parallels as well as the differences between Ezra/Nehemiah and Trito-Isaiah as the finale of the Book of Isaiah<sup>34</sup>. Of course, there would be a great overlap of thought concerning, e.g., the uniqueness of YHWH, the rejection of illegitimate cults and the emphasis on ethical behaviour<sup>35</sup>. But the differences in the way of defining Israel among the nations would be more understandable as well: After the return to Judah, some exilic concepts to strengthen Israel's identity on Babylonian soil were confronted with the reality in the land. Conflicts were inevitable: «Social boundaries erected as a mechanism for survival led to conflicts upon returning to Palestine»<sup>36</sup>.

Therefore, it is inadequate to consider Trito-Isaiah only as a «representative of the interests and the theology of the Babylonian גולה»<sup>37</sup>. Not only the returnees but all members of Israel had to face the following issues: exclusive monotheism, circumcision, Sabbath, regulations concerning the cult of YHWH and the participation in it, cultic purity and the organization of communal life. At least some parts of the Golah favoured a clear-cut separation from all foreign influences in order to foster their own identity. This policy led to an increased self-esteem («holy seed»).

This development is already discernible in Isaiah 40–55 since these chapters underline that the true Israel consists only of that part of Jacob which not only names oneself after the holy city but in fact returns to the land of the Patriarchs<sup>38</sup>. There had been more than a century of separate development between the Golah settling in an urban, highly developed culture and the Judeans living in the rural and mostly depopulated homeland. By consequence the groups intensively struggled for an

<sup>33</sup> Cf. U. BERGES, ««Singt dem Herrn ein neues Lied». Zu den Trägerkreisen von Jesajabuch und Psalter», *Trägerkreise in den Psalmen* (eds. F.L. HOSSFELD † et al.) (BBB 178; Göttingen 2017) 11–18.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Isa 52,11 and the vision that YHWH's vessels will be carried on the way back to their homeland; cf. U. BERGES, *Jesaja 49–54* (HThKAT; Freiburg 2015) 203–204.

<sup>35</sup> SCHRAMM, *The Opponents of Third-Isaiah*, 179: «it shows that Third Isaiah and the <priestly> Pentateuch, at least in regard to these basic cultic issues, are in total agreement».

<sup>36</sup> D.L. SMITH, «The Politics of Ezra. Sociological Indicators of Postexilic Judean Society», *Second Temple Studies. 1. Persian Period* (ed. P.R. DAVIES) (JSOTSS 117; Sheffield 1991) 73–97, 97.

<sup>37</sup> Contrary to SCHRAMM, *The Opponents of Third-Isaiah*, 179. This applies also for the dichotomy between «segregationists» (Golah) und «assimilationists» (non-deportees); cf. M. SMITH, «Jewish Religious Life in the Persian Period», *The Cambridge History of Judaism, Vol. I, Introduction. The Persian Period* (eds. W.D. DAVIES – L. FINKELSTEIN) (Cambridge 1984) 219–278, esp. 245–250.

<sup>38</sup> This is discernible esp. in Isaiah 48, see BERGES, *Jesaja 40–48*, 511–514.

aligned policy of restoration. Evidently, the identity formation in postexilic times was accomplished by means of a strict segregation. According to Neh 10,29, the observance of the Law was not only vowed by priests, Levites and the leaders of the people but also by those who have separated themselves from the peoples of the land (cf. Ezra 6,21). This might refer to Judeans who had not been deported and maintained a close contact to the local population<sup>39</sup> as well as to non-Judeans who wanted to join the people of God<sup>40</sup>. But is it really necessary at this point to decide between these two groups? What is important is the rejection of a lifestyle and rites which were not compatible with the Torah or were considered to be contradictory to the Law<sup>41</sup>. The actual specification of this principle was part of the discourse carried out by the specialists, i.e. the theologians, since there is no religious or cultic tradition which is not in constant need of reorientation and interpretation. In the case of Ancient Israel the Sabbath was least disputed since its origins trace back to pre-exilic times (cf. Exod 20,11; 23,12; Hos 2,13; Amos 8,5). Nevertheless, it did not become a «marker of the religious and cultural identity»<sup>42</sup> until postexilic times. So, there certainly was a broad agreement among theological circles, on the one hand concerning Neh 9,14 where the Sabbath is praised as a divinely established feast, and on the other hand concerning Neh 13,15-22 where its desecration is denounced as a public offence (cf. Isa 56,2.4.6; 58,13; 66,23). The observance of the Sabbath did not constitute a controversial subject between the Levitical traditions of the Book of Isaiah, the religious agenda in Ezra/Nehemiah and the priestly concept of the Book of Ezekiel (cf. «to profane the Sabbath» in Neh 13,17-18; Isa 56,6; cf. Exod 31,14; Ezek 20,13.16.21.24; 22,8; 23,38)<sup>43</sup>.

Regarding the issue of «circumcision», the agreement was limited. Nevertheless, there was a generally accepted basic rule of procedure. According to Gen 17,12, every male has to be circumcised eight days after his birth regardless of him being the offspring of an Israelite or the child of a non-Hebrew house slave. All members of an Israelite house community

<sup>39</sup> Thus, e.g., BLENKINSOPP, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 314.

<sup>40</sup> Thus, e.g., ROTHENBUSCH, *Ethnisch-religiöse Identitäten im Esra/Nehemiabuch*, 367.

<sup>41</sup> For example the polemical stance in Isaiah 57; see T.J. LEWIS, «Death Cult Imagery in Isaiah 57», *HAR* 11 (1987) 267-284; C. NIHAN, «Trois cultes en Ésaïe 57,3-13 et leur signification dans le contexte religieux de la Judée à l'époque perse», *Trans* 22 (2001) 143-167.

<sup>42</sup> I. MÜLLNER (with P. DSCHULNIGG), *Jüdische und christliche Feste* (NEB Erg. 9; Würzburg 2002) 13: «*Zeichen religiöser und kultureller Identität*» (Italics in original).

<sup>43</sup> In a similar manner, there is a consensus among all Christian denominations about Sunday as a non-working day while at the same time differing in many other issues and each considering their own position as scriptural.

had to be circumcised, and this applied also to those who had been bought from a «foreigner» (בן נכר). Referring to this Andreas Schüle notes:

Apparently, this instruction was due to cultic and pragmatic reasons: Whoever stayed permanently in an Israelite household and was involved in the daily conduct of life had to be integrated into the religious life particularly in order to avoid permanent problems. The circumcision was therefore not considered as a privilege which was in any case reserved to Abraham's seed but as a criterion for the cultic admission whose requirements needed to be met also by those who did not belong to Israel in terms of lineage <sup>44</sup>.

In the same way, the Pesach-ordinance of Exod 12,43-44 indicates a gradual admission to the cult: «All foreigners (כל בן נכר) shall not eat of it, but any slave who has been purchased may eat of it after he has been circumcised». According to Jakob Wöhrle, Gen 17,9-14 and Exod 12,43-49 belong to the same postexilic redactional level which advocates an integration while at the same time emphasizing the special character of the people of God: «Both texts present circumcision as a way to integrate alien persons into the covenant people and thus to legitimize their residing in the land and their relationship to the God of Abraham» <sup>45</sup>.

At this point, we have to take into account the important distinction between גר and בן נכר which will be central for the subsequent interpretation of Isa 56,1-8:

The foreigner is of non-Israelite, i.e. of non-Jewish descent, and becomes a *ger* only by circumcision (Exod 12,48) whereas he remains excluded as an uncircumcised *baen nekar* (Exod 12,43). This development in the religious law is not primarily located in Judah/Jerusalem but in the diaspora. Its acceptance in the temple of Jerusalem was advocated by the prophetic decision of Isa 56,1ff. <sup>46</sup>.

Surprisingly, the distinct self-concept as people of God did not lead to a total isolation from all foreign influence but to a relative openness towards foreign cultural assets, a stance quite appropriate for the historical situation of Judah as part of the Persian Empire. This is a link between the diverse legal texts of the Pentateuch and the idea of integration propagated

<sup>44</sup> A. SCHÜLE, «Eine Tora für Fremde und Eunuchen. Jesaja 56,1-8 als prophetische Gesetzgebung», *Nächstenliebe und Gottesfurcht*. Festschrift H.-P. Mathys (eds. H. JENNI – M. SAUR) (AOAT 439; Münster 2016) 435-450, 440 (English translation by the author of this article).

<sup>45</sup> J. WÖHRLE, «The Integrative Function of the Law of Circumcision», *The Foreigner and the Law*. Perspectives from the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East (eds. R. ACHENBACH et al.) (BZAR 16; Wiesbaden 2011) 71-87, 84.

<sup>46</sup> C. BULTMANN, *Der Fremde im antiken Juda*. Eine Untersuchung zum sozialen Typenbegriff «ger» und seinem Bedeutungswandel in der alttestamentlichen Gesetzgebung (FRLANT 153; Göttingen 1992) 216 (English translation by the author of this article).



by the Book of Isaiah apparently in contradiction with the policies of Ezra and Nehemiah <sup>47</sup>.

In this context, «intermarriages» became the most serious and problematic topic, since they represent the exact opposite to the preferred rigorous «separation» (בדל) <sup>48</sup>. Although Ezra 10,3 refers to the forced separation as being executed «according to the Law», there is no such prescription in the entire Pentateuch. The interdiction of Dtn 7,2 does not directly apply because it refers to the prohibition of making a covenant with the peoples of the land. But in Dtn 7,3 this interdiction is explained and elaborated by the prohibition of intermarriages <sup>49</sup>. According to Blenkinsopp, this verse represents a «rigorist interpretation of the Deuteronomic law forbidding marriage with the native population» <sup>50</sup>. Thus, endogamy as prescribed here constitutes an uncompromising rule which is not represented either in the Pentateuch or in the prophetic books. Moreover, the Patriarchal narratives as well as the historical books are full of exogamous marriages <sup>51</sup>. The policy of Ezra and Nehemiah became even more controversial as they opposed not only the affiliation of the non-Judean population but also the connection with Judeans from the homeland whose families had not been part of the Golah.

This segregation policy became a legal matter because many men of the Golah (העם ישראל) had married foreign women (literally «women from the peoples of the lands», cf. Ezra 9–10) <sup>52</sup>. The intervention affected all marriages with women whose families did not belong to the returnees from the Golah <sup>53</sup>. Recent studies on the social backgrounds of the Diaspora have shown that young males represented a considerable part of the

<sup>47</sup> R. ALBERTZ, «From Aliens to Proselytes. Non Priestly and Priestly Legislation Concerning Strangers», *The Foreigner and the Law*, 53–69, esp. 66.

<sup>48</sup> Thus S.M. OLYAN, «Stigmatizing Associations. The Alien, Things Alien, and Practices Associated with Aliens in Biblical Classification Schemas», *The Foreigner and the Law*, 17–28, 24–25: «Mixing, in this instance, is the opposite of separation, which is the central goal of the xenophobic program advocated in a number of sources of Ezra-Nehemiah».

<sup>49</sup> See E. OTTO, *Deuteronomium 4,44 – 11,32* (HThKAT; Freiburg 2012) 862–863.

<sup>50</sup> BLENKINSOPP, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 189.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. the list of «Intermarriages in the Old Testament» in L.-S. TIEMEYER, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage. Post-Exilic Prophetic Critique of the Priesthood* (FAT 2.19; Tübingen 2006) 179–180.

<sup>52</sup> According to Y. DOR, «The Rite of Separation of the Foreign Wives in Ezra-Nehemiah», *Judah and Judeans*, 173–188, esp. 186, the forced separations actually were never put in practice but constituted only a ritual act.

<sup>53</sup> BLENKINSOPP, *Judaism, the First Phase*, 64. According to M. SMITH, «Jewish Religious Life in the Persian Period», *Second Temple Studies. 1. Persian Period*, 219–278, 245, Ezra exaggerated the policy of forced separation of intermarriages to such an extent that the Persian authorities removed him from his office since the Persian Empire depended on the collaboration of the local elites.

returnees to the homeland who then found only a small number of marriageable females from the «in-group».

Ezra's and Nehemiah's agenda is basically motivated by a theologically construed concept of ethnicity: «what is at issue is a theory of ritual ethnicity rather than simply what we would call religious affiliation»<sup>54</sup>. Compared to Nehemiah's concept, Ezra's policy of demarcation and segregation is even more rigid and elaborated in theological terms. The dissolution of intermarriages is considered as a separation from the «others», as «alterity becomes an antagonism»<sup>55</sup>.

#### IV. THE POSITION OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH BASED ON ISA 56,1-8

The Book of Isaiah definitely does not share this position of Ezra/Nehemiah. By contrast, it thoroughly advocates a widened concept of YHWH's followers. Non-Israelites (בני הנכר) and castrates (סריסים) are admitted to the cult community under the condition that they keep the Sabbath and refrain from all evil. This widening of concept is not only justified eschatologically («soon my salvation will come») but also sustained by the ethical imperative: «Maintain justice, and do what is right» (Isa 56,1). Whoever keeps the Sabbath and holds back his hands from evil (cf. the participial forms in v. 2b) belongs to the cultic community of YHWH at the Jerusalem temple and will not be cut off from the covenant. God will not separate (בדל) those who already joined (ליוה) the community (cf. Isa 56,3: מעל עמו)<sup>56</sup>. The foreigners in this pericope are called בני הנכר instead of גר (as in Isa 14,1) because the full participation in the Jerusalem temple cult is affirmed explicitly to uncircumcised foreigners or those who cannot be circumcised any more (סריס).

It is not a coincidence that the expression בן אדם «son of man» within a discussion concerning the admission or exclusion of uncircumcised and their «ministry» (שרת) is only to be found in Isa 56,1-8 and Ezek 44,4-31. Rather, this terminological overlap points to a shared historical context<sup>57</sup>. While Ezek 44,7 strictly forbids the admission of uncircumcised

<sup>54</sup> BLENKINSOPP, *Judaism, the First Phase*, 67.

<sup>55</sup> ROTHENBUSCH, *Ethnisch-religiöse Identitäten im Esra/Nehemiabuch*, 315: «Aus der Alterität wird ein Antagonismus». At a later time, the community of Qumran left no scope for integration at all, cf. 4Q174 1,3-4.

<sup>56</sup> ROM-SHILONI, *Exclusive Inclusivity*, 134 n. 135, distinguishes between incorporation and universalism: «I would keep incorporation strategies completely apart from universalism tendencies».

<sup>57</sup> B.D. SOMMER, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*. Allusion in Isaiah 40–66 (Stanford, CA 1998) 278.

as a «breach of the covenant», Isa 56,4.6 vehemently vindicates the same issue as an «adherence [to the covenant]»<sup>58</sup>. If the servants who advocated the admission of foreigners have indeed a Levitical background, namely as descendants of deported temple singers, the salient polemics of Ezek 44,9-14 take on even greater significance. The priestly authors of Ezekiel strongly reject the position in the Book of Isaiah by drawing a parallel between the servants in Trito-Isaiah and the idolatrous Levites during the time of Moses.

The use of *לִוּה* «to join» in Isa 56,3.6 could be a hidden indication<sup>59</sup>. In Num 18,2.4 the Levites join the ministry under Aaron's primacy in order to carry out minor cultic services whereas according to Isa 56,6 the foreigners directly join YHWH in order to serve him and to love his name. While the admission of eunuchs contradicts Deut 23,7-8, the admission of foreigners to the cultic service is in conflict with Num 18,4: «They [the Levites] are attached to you in order to perform the duties of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent; no outsider shall approach you». Against the backdrop of this regulation, Isa 56,7 has to be considered as a provocation since it portrays foreigners not only as tolerated cultic participants. Instead, YHWH himself promises to accept their sacrifices<sup>60</sup>.

This concept stands in marked contrast to Ezekiel 44 and puts the emphasis on the cultic sphere which is not the primary focus of Ezra/Nehemiah. As Ralf Rothenbusch puts it: «In my opinion, the emphasis on the issue of the admission of eunuchs and foreigners to the temple cult in [Isa 56] V. 7 indicates that the entire passage does not only deal with the policy of segregation of Ezra and Nehemiah which was centered more on ethnic and religious matters than on cultic issues»<sup>61</sup>. The end of the Book of Nehemiah shows that a full participation of foreigners in the cult would affect the concept of the people of God. Thus Nehemiah praises himself for having cleansed the community from everything foreign (*מכל-נכר*) and

<sup>58</sup> See V. HAARMANN, *JHWH-Verehrer der Völker*. Die Hinwendung von Nichtisraeliten zum Gott Israels in alttestamentlichen Überlieferungen (ATHANT 91; Zurich 2008) 229-232; ID., ««Their Burnt Offerings and their Sacrifices will be Accepted on my Altar» (Isa 56:7). Gentile YHWH-Worshippers and their Participation in the Cult of Israel», *The Foreigner and the Law*, 157-171, 160-164.

<sup>59</sup> The word seems to be a technical term for «joining» the people of God, cf. Isa 14,1; Jer 50,5; Zech 2,15; Esth 9,27; Dan 11,34.

<sup>60</sup> Admittance or non-admission to the temple cult had also social consequences; cf. J.L. BERQUIST, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow*. A Social and Historical Approach (Minneapolis, MN 1995) 150: «Not only did the temple provide a locus for the creation of insider/outsider distinctions but it also offered an ideology that allowed for potential exclusion».

<sup>61</sup> ROTHENBUSCH, *Ethnisch-religiöse Identitäten*, 370 (English translation by the author of this article).

having established the duties of priests and Levites accordingly (Neh 13,30a; cf. *בדל* in Neh 13,3; Ezra 6,21) <sup>62</sup>.

The expansion of the worship of YHWH proposed by the Book of Isaiah and especially by chapters 55-66 does not occur totally unexpected. In fact, the authors of Isaiah 56 had prominent predecessors, namely the circle of *literati* behind the priestly laws. Some sacrificial prescriptions as well as the prohibition of the consumption of blood applies equally to Israelites and foreigners (*גרים*) (cf. Lev 17,8.10.12-13.15; 20,2; 22,18). In this respect, Thomas Hieke points to interesting aspects concerning the social and legal background of the postexilic community:

In terms of civil and legal affairs the foreigner and the Israelite share the same status [...] However, there is a difference in terms of the religious law: Foreigners had to observe the interdictory laws (prohibitions) but not the performative regulations (commandments). Consequently, they were not obliged to keep the festival prescriptions but had to observe the prohibition of work (e.g. Lev 16,29). Israelites under no circumstances are allowed to miss Pesach (emphasized by the *karet*-sanction, Num 9,13) whereas foreigners may participate at the festival as long as they are circumcised and willing to observe all prescriptions (Exod 12,48-49; Num 9,14) <sup>63</sup>.

So apparently, the priestly legal tradition which endorsed and to some extent even demanded the participation of foreigners in the cult constitutes the breeding ground for the agenda of Isaiah 56 <sup>64</sup>. The authors and composers of the last part of the Book of Isaiah were in favour of the acceptance of foreigners against the backdrop of the prophetic ethics on the one hand, and the «exilic» experience of YHWH as the sole and universal God on the other hand. YHWH took Cyrus, the Persian, as His anointed one and shepherd by his hand (Isa 44,28; 45,1) in order to carry out His plan of liberation before the peoples' eyes. Wouldn't it be the logical consequence that after the return to Zion the sanctuary in Jerusalem becomes a house of prayer for all people, circumcised and uncircumcised?

Nevertheless, this policy does not advocate a total cancellation of boundaries. On the contrary, the admission to YHWH's «people» (Isa 56,3) is inextricably tied to the imperative demanding a moral conduct of life. Thus, the central word pairs «justice and righteousness» (*צדקה/משפט*) as well as «salvation and righteousness» (*צדקה/ישוע*) in Isa 56,1 function as

<sup>62</sup> Thus also OLYAN, «Stigmatizing Associations», 24.

<sup>63</sup> T. HIEKE, *Leviticus 16–27* (HThKAT; Freiburg 2014) 629 (English translation by the author of this article).

<sup>64</sup> With regard to the status of foreigners see BULTMANN, *Der Fremde im antiken Juda*; R. ACHENBACH et al. (eds.), *The Foreigner and the Law*. Perspectives from the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East (BZAR 16; Wiesbaden 2011).

some sort of superscription. The first pair is often found in Proto-Isaiah (e.g. 1,21.27; 5,7.16; 9,6), the second is cited several times in Isaiah 40–55 (45,8; 46,13; 51,5.6.8). Their combination is an evidence for the fact that the last main part of the book was able to draw on already present texts <sup>65</sup>. The impetus of the concept is obvious and perfectly meets the prophetic tradition: Cult issues have to be in line with ethical behaviour and cannot be dealt with separately. When ethics are put into practice ethnicity is no longer an obstacle for participation. Foreigners who observe justice, do righteousness and have joined the people of the covenant do not have to worry about being excluded. The eunuch should not say he is a «dry tree» (Isa 56,3). God gave the steadfast promise: In his house and within his walls he will give him «a monument and a name» (יד ושם), better than sons and daughters, an everlasting name that shall not be cut off (Isa 56,5).

By means of the specification «the foreigner» (בן נכר) and «the eunuch» (סריס) it becomes blatantly obvious that all individuals, circumcised or not, are allowed to participate in the cultic ceremonies including offerings and prayers at the temple in Jerusalem. This topic refers to Isa 55,1-5 where «everyone who thirsts» is invited to come to the waters, an allusion to the revelation of the divine will in Jerusalem and on Mount Zion. So, there is no doubt that the prophetic Torah in Isa 56,1-8 concerning the admission of foreigners to the cult refers to the unrestricted invitation in Isaiah 55 <sup>66</sup>. Thus, we finally should overcome the sharp division between Isaiah 55 and Isaiah 56 established by Duhm since it proved to be a wrong track of research <sup>67</sup>. The same applies to the overemphasized reference between Isa 56,1-8 and 66,18-23 as a frame to modify the so-called Trito-Isaianic chapters since the two texts do not belong to the same redactional level as can be seen from the fact that Isa 56,1-8 deals with individual members from the Gentiles whereas the latter text envisions entire nations coming to Jerusalem <sup>68</sup>.

When read against the background of Isaiah 55, Isa 56,1-8 implies the following prophetic message: YHWH's decisive criterion is not the Persian Empire exploiting subdued peoples with its taxes but the ethically

<sup>65</sup> Still instructive R. RENDTORFF, «Jesaja 56,1 als Schlüssel für die Komposition des Buches Jesaja», *Kanon und Theologie. Vorarbeiten zu einer Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991) 172-179.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. G.I. DAVIES, «The Destiny of the Nations in the Book of Isaiah», *The Book of Isaiah*, 93-120, esp. 118.

<sup>67</sup> See U. BERGES, «Where Does Trito-Isaiah Start in the Book of Isaiah?», *Continuity and Discontinuity. Chronological and Thematic Development in Isaiah 40–66* (eds. L.-S. TIEMEYER – H.M. BARSTAD) (FRLANT 255; Göttingen 2014) 63-76; Id., *Jesaja 49–54*, 287-292; HAARMANN, *JHWH-Verehrer der Völker*, 214.

<sup>68</sup> Thus correctly HAARMANN, *JHWH-Verehrer der Völker*, 216-217.

determined conversion of all humans to YHWH and his temple as an offering place and a house of prayer for all peoples. In this way, the «everlasting covenant» with its «steadfast compassion» (חסדי הנאמנים) becomes reality, yet in a totally unexpected way. David no longer conquers foreign peoples. Instead, foreign nations come voluntarily attracted by YHWH's promise of life. The God of Israel will favourably accept the burnt offerings and sacrifices offered by «Gentile YHWH-Worshippers»<sup>69</sup> «for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples» (Isa 56,7; cf. 1 Kgs 8,41-43; Zech 14,20-21). Still, the foreigners and uncircumcised do not become «Israel», since the concept advocates participation not integration.

The broadened admission to the worship of YHWH in Isa 56,1-8 has to be understood as a continuation of Isa 55,12-13. There, the jubilating trees and the transformation of dry wood into precious plants function as an everlasting sign to YHWH «which will not be cut off». The servants (Isa 54,17b) thus act as «leaders» and «rulers» in cult issues, in contradiction to the Mosaic Law prescribing the exclusion of men with damaged genitals (Deut 23,2; cf. Ezek 44,7-8; Ezra 9,1-4; Neh 9,2). The main criterion is the ethical orientation of all worshipers from Israel and abroad<sup>70</sup>.

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we return to our initial questions: What is the relationship between Trito-Isaiah and Ezra/Nehemiah? Does the Book of Isaiah in its final form foster their restoration program or speak against it? First of all, both literary accounts agree on the importance of Jerusalem as centre of postexilic Israel. After the divinely ordained replacement of Babylonia by the Persians an existence as Jacob/Israel in Babylon was no longer appropriate. Contrary to the Persian officials Ezra/Nehemiah, the authors of Trito-Isaiah do not seem to be motivated by strong pro-Persian feelings. Rather, their decisive factor was a theological concept. According to the authors/redactors of Trito-Isaiah and the Book of Isaiah as a whole, the significance of Cyrus consisted in his role as conqueror of Babylon and ended with the Persian political and military campaign against the

<sup>69</sup> HAARMANN, «Burnt Offerings», 157-171.

<sup>70</sup> P. HÖFFKEN, «Das Jesajabuch als Oppositionsliteratur», *Widerstehen und Erziehen im christlichen Glauben*. Festschrift G. Ringshausen (ed. G. BESIER – G.R. SCHMIDT) (Holzgerlingen 1999) 13-25.

Neo-Babylonian Empire (Isa 44,28; 45,1). The task of gathering Israel and carrying out the divine plan is not to be accomplished by the Persian Emperor but by YHWH's servant Israel (cf. Isa 49,1-9).

According to Ezra 1,1-3; 6,14, the reconstruction of the temple is the central project of the Persians by which they hope to establish stability and social order in the province. According to Trito-Isaiah, the rebuilding of the temple must not be accomplished at the expense of YHWH's sovereignty, his demand for justice and righteousness (cf. Is 66,1-4). For the tradents of the Book of Isaiah the divine kingdom over the entire world was the decisive reason for the participation of foreigners and eventually by entire foreign nations in the worship of YHWH. This approach is shared mainly by the Book of Psalms <sup>71</sup>. Those biblical books that put an emphasis on «Zion» cannot bypass the nations. Accordingly, the Book of Ezekiel avoids the term «Zion» at all costs.

Ezra and to a lesser extent Nehemiah (esp. chap. 13) favoured the temple personal whereas Trito-Isaiah is quite critical of them (cf. Isaiah 66). According to Ezekiel 44 and Ezra 8 (cf. Numbers 16) the Levites did not have any right to perform the altar service. Apparently, the authors of Trito-Isaiah were in conflict with the Zadokites as well as with the Aaronides. This struggle among the latter groups resulted in a compromise between the priests serving at the altar (Zadokites) and the temple servants (Aaronides) <sup>72</sup>. In this fight for sacrificial authority the tradents of the Book of Isaiah did not prevail. At the end, they became part of the *clerus minor*. Their duty was the temple music so that they also profited from the temple. Otherwise, it would have been unimaginable to get the financial and logistic means to compose religious texts as the Book of Isaiah considering the high costs and the scarce resources in Jerusalem and Jehud at that time.

Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn  
D-53113 Bonn (Germany)

Ulrich BERGES

<sup>71</sup> T. WILLI, «Levitens, Priester und Kult in vorhellenistischer Zeit», 48-70, points out that Isa 56,1-8 and Isaiah 66 are not the only texts characterized by an universal orientation. According to him (56), this trait is also present in Ezra and Nehemiah. Nevertheless, he has to postulate a sharp and significant distinction between national identity (status as citizen) and participation in the cult. This assumption seems to contradict the literary account since the reconstruction of the temple, e.g., is radically limited to Judeans whereas Samaritans and people of Ammon are not allowed to join the work.

<sup>72</sup> See the genealogical chart of the high priests in 1 Chr 5,27-41 (cf. 1 Chr 6,37) where Zadok is set in the very center of the list.



## SUMMARY

The relationship between Trito-Isaiah and the Books of Ezra/Nehemiah is a highly disputed issue. Does the last main part of the Book of Isaiah support the reforms of the two Persian officials or does it constitute a prophetic counter-program? The article steers a middle course by re-evaluating the correct observations of both positions. The focus on Jerusalem constitutes an important link. Nevertheless, in Trito-Isaiah the massive *ethnic* orientation of Ezra/Nehemiah is supplemented if not rescinded by the concentration on *ethical* issues. The decisive break line is not the openness towards proselytes but the radical expansion of YHWH's worship.

## THE MEANING OF EZEKIEL 44,6-14 IN LIGHT OF EZEKIEL 1–39

The question of the historical and literary background of Ezek 44,6-14 has been much discussed and answered in different ways. As the following outline will show, Ezek 44,6-14 is usually interpreted either as a reference to a historical event outside the book of Ezekiel (perhaps mentioned in other biblical texts) or as an example of inner-biblical interpretation. While I do not reject either of these two approaches per se, the focus of this paper is on the question of whether Ezek 44,6-14 makes reference to earlier chapters within the Book of Ezekiel itself. When interpreting this pericope, *intra*-textual references should have priority over *inter*-textual and historical references. I will concede that there may be both intertextual and historical references in Ezek 44,6-14; I will argue, however, that the primary references are to preceding texts within the Book of Ezekiel itself. Any intertextual or historical reference should be regarded as subordinated to the message of the book itself.

Julius Wellhausen<sup>1</sup> identified the Levites in Ezekiel 44 with the priests of the high places that had been abolished by King Josiah, as reported in 2 Kings 23; he further identified the Zadokites with the priesthood in Jerusalem who had already been serving in the temple in Jerusalem before the time of Josiah. As such, he takes Ezekiel to be degrading the non-Jerusalemite Levites for the abominations they committed at the high places. According to this interpretation, Ezekiel 44 functions as the missing link between D, where all Levites were regarded as priests, and P, where there is no indication that the Levites ever served as priests. This view has dominated biblical scholarship for almost a century. In his influential study on Ezekiel 40–48, Hartmut Gese still operated with these assumptions<sup>2</sup>. It was Antonius H.J. Gunneweg who fundamentally questioned this model<sup>3</sup>. He rejected both the idea that Levites had been priests before the Josianic reform and the idea that the priests of the high places who had been brought to Jerusalem were Levites. As a result, he does not believe that the historical referent of Ezek 44,6-14 is the Josianic reform. As an alternative, he

<sup>1</sup> J. WELLHAUSEN, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (Berlin 1905) 115-145.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., H. GESE, *Der Verfassungsentwurf des Ezechiel (Kap. 40–48) traditions-geschichtlich untersucht* (BHT 25; Tübingen 1957) 121, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See A.H.J. GUNNEWEG, *Levitiden und Priester. Hauptlinien der Traditionsbildung und Geschichte des israelitisch-jüdischen Kultpersonals* (FRLANT 89; Göttingen 1965) 118-126; 198-203.

tentatively suggests that the conflict referenced in Ezekiel 44 is a conflict between the Zadokites, understood to be the former Jerusalemite priesthood, and a group of originally non-Jerusalemite priests and Levites, understood to have been influential for some time among the Jerusalemite post-exilic cult personnel <sup>4</sup>. Gunneweg believes that the Zadokites were responsible for composing Ezekiel 44, and that these same people were responsible also for the composition of Numbers 18, a text which formulates the distinction between priests and Levites in the same terms.

My goal here is not to provide a detailed outline of the history of research. While some scholars still defend Wellhausen's identification of the priests of the high places in 2 Kgs 23,5-9 with the Levites in Deut 18,7 <sup>5</sup>, thus identifying the sin of the Levites mentioned in Ezekiel 44 as their service at the high places, others reject this identification and provide alternative explanations <sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, as Nathan MacDonald has recently pointed out, "even Wellhausen's critics have taken his account as their starting point in offering alternative reconstructions" <sup>7</sup>. Many have suggested linking Ezekiel 44 to historical or literary (inner-biblical) backgrounds, such as Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16-18 <sup>8</sup>, the idolatry with Baal of Peor in Numbers 25 <sup>9</sup>, the story of the Gibeonites in Joshua 9 <sup>10</sup>, the sin of Jeroboam

<sup>4</sup> GUNNEWEG, *Leviten*, 203.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., K.W. CARLEY, *The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (CBC; Cambridge 1974) 294; N. ALLAN, "The Identity of the Jerusalem Priesthood during the Exile", *HeyJ* 23 (1982) 259-269, here 265-269; A. CODY, *Ezekiel: With an Excursus on Old Testament Priesthood* (OTM 11; Wilmington, DE 1984) 159-160; R.M. HALS, *Ezekiel* (FOTL 19; Grand Rapids, MI 1989); J. SCHAPER, *Priester und Leviten im achämenidischen Juda* (FAT 31; Tübingen 2000) 79-95.

<sup>6</sup> E.g. J.D. LEVENSON, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezek 40-48* (HSM 10; Missoula, MT 1976) 134-140; R. ABBA, "Priests and Levites in Ezekiel", *VT* 28 (1978) 4-5; M. HARAN, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1978) 104-111; J.G. MCCONVILLE, "Priests and Levites in Ezekiel: A Crux in the Interpretation of Israel's History", *TynB* 34 (1983) 3-32, here 7-9; R.K. DUKE, "Punishment or Restoration? Another Look at the Levites of Ezekiel 44,6-16", *JSOT* 40 (1988) 61-81, here 66-72; S.S. TUELL, *The Law of the Temple in Ezekiel 40-48* (HSM 49; Atlanta, GA 1992) 150-151; I.M. DUGUID, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel* (VTS 56; Leiden 1994) 79-80; S.L. COOK, "Innerbiblical Interpretation in Ezekiel 44 and the History of Israel's Priesthood", *JBL* 114 (1995) 193-208; J. BLENKINSOPP, "The Judean Priesthood during the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Periods: A Hypothetical Reconstruction", *CBQ* 60 (1998) 25-43, here 41-42; T.A. RUDNIG, *Heilig und Profan. Redaktionskritische Studien zu Ez 40-48* (BZAW 287; Berlin 2000) 291-295; M. KONKEL, *Architektonik des Heiligen. Studien zur zweiten Tempelvision Ezechiels (Ez 40-48)* (BBB 129; Berlin 2001) 304-317.

<sup>7</sup> N. MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule. Polemic and Biblical Interpretation in Ezekiel 44* (BZAW 476; Berlin 2015) 5.

<sup>8</sup> COOK, "Innerbiblical Interpretation".

<sup>9</sup> For further discussion, see LEVENSON, *Theology*, 136-138.

<sup>10</sup> W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezechiel*. 2. Teilband: *Ezekiel 25-48* (BKAT XIII/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969) 1125. For further discussion, see also LEVENSON, *Theology*, 135-136.

in 1 Kgs 12,28-32<sup>11</sup>, the Carians mentioned in 2 Kgs 11,4-8<sup>12</sup>, the idolatry in the time of Manasseh in 2 Kgs 21,1-9<sup>13</sup>, the **בְּתִינִים**, descendants of the slaves of king Solomon, mentioned in Ezra 2,43-54<sup>14</sup>. On the other hand, several scholars have concluded that, due to a lack of data, it is simply not possible to identify a historical background for the apostasy described in Ezekiel 44<sup>15</sup>. According to Stephen L. Cook, who argues that Ezekiel 44 is an inner-biblical interpretation of Numbers 16-18, many scholars have misconstrued Ezekiel 44 “as a mirror of history”<sup>16</sup>.

What all these approaches have in common is that they seek to locate the primary referent of Ezekiel 44 outside of the book itself, whether within history or within other parts of the Bible. As Michael Konkel has conceded in the introduction to his study on Ezekiel 40-48, these chapters have yet to be integrated into the Book of Ezekiel as a whole<sup>17</sup>. In his recent study on the canonical shape of the Book of Ezekiel, Tobias Häner similarly notes that Ezekiel 40-48 has often been studied apart from the rest of the book<sup>18</sup>. This is not to say that no proposals at all have been made. With regard to Ezek 44,10, Steven S. Tuell points to Ezek 6,3-6; 8,10; 14,3-4, where the same term for idols is used and where the place of the idolatry is the Temple<sup>19</sup>. Alice Hunt suggests that “Ezek 44 is an interpretation of Ezek 23”<sup>20</sup>. Most recently, Nathan MacDonald has argued “that Ezek 44:10-14 is a sophisticated example of inner-biblical interpretation in which two distinct texts have been interwoven: Numbers 18 and Ezekiel 14”<sup>21</sup>. However, these proposals focus on individual, isolated passages that are related to Ezekiel 44 on its own, rather than

<sup>11</sup> ABBA, “Priests”, 5.

<sup>12</sup> L.C. ALLEN, *Ezekiel 20-48* (WBC 29; Dallas, TX 1990) 261; J. MILGROM, “Ezekiel and the Levites”, *Sacred History, Sacred Literature. Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible, and Religion in Honor of R.E. Friedman on his Sixtieth Birthday* (ed. S. DOLANSKY) (Winona Lake, IN 2008) 3-12, here 7.

<sup>13</sup> HARAN, *Temples*, 106.

<sup>14</sup> ZIMMERLI, *Ezechiel*, 1125.

<sup>15</sup> MCCONVILLE, “Priests and Levites”, 25-26; RUDNIG, *Heilig*, 295; KONKEL, *Architektonik*, 317.

<sup>16</sup> COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”, 8.

<sup>17</sup> KONKEL, *Architektonik*, 7.

<sup>18</sup> T. HÄNER, *Bleibendes Nachwirken des Exils. Eine Untersuchung zur kanonischen Endgestalt des Ezechielbuches* (HBS 78; Freiburg 2014) 495: “Die partikuläre sprachliche und inhaltliche Gestalt dieses Buchteils hat indes in der Forschung zu dessen gesonderter Betrachtung Anlass gegeben, um in traditions- und redaktionskritischer Analyse das Werden des sog. ez. Verfassungsentwurfs zu beleuchten”.

<sup>19</sup> TUELL, *Law*, 149.

<sup>20</sup> A. HUNT, *Missing Priests. The Zadokites in Tradition and History* (LHBOTS 452; New York 2006) 143.

<sup>21</sup> MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 49.

looking at Ezekiel 40–48 within the context of the book as a whole. So the question that needs to be asked is this: is it possible to identify a conceptual link between Ezek 44,6-14 and earlier parts of the book? Are there connections that go beyond more or less isolated allusions?

# I. EZEKIEL 40–48 IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Tobias Häner's recent synchronic study of the book of Ezekiel <sup>22</sup> offers many important insights that raise the question of whether Ezek 44,6-14 refers to texts that occur earlier in the book. According to Häner's stringent linguistic-semiotic analysis, the Book of Ezekiel is divided into an introduction and five acts:

- 1–3 Introduction: The entrance to the book
- 4–11 1<sup>st</sup> Act: "The end has come!" (Ezek 7,2)
- 12–24 2<sup>nd</sup> Act: "Turn, and live!" (Ezek 18,32)
- 25–32 3<sup>rd</sup> Act: "I spread terror in the land of the living" (Ezek 32,32)
- 33–39 4<sup>th</sup> Act: "When they dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid" (Ezek 39,26)
- 40–48 5<sup>th</sup> Act: "I will accept you" (Ezek 43,27)

Häner shows that, despite having a distinct character, Ezekiel 40–48 belongs to the rest of the book and even forms its climax. While the fourth act announces a new exodus event in which Israel will return to its land, the fifth act portrays what Israel's identity in the land will truly be, mediated by God's assurance of forgiveness. According to Häner <sup>23</sup>, the theocentric focus of the book as a whole finds its cultic enactment in the fifth act. The dramaturgical composition of the first four acts functions to shame its readers by portraying Israel's exile and the return as YHWH's acts in history. The fifth act, on the other hand, contains the goal of this process, which is Israel's recovery of its true identity, an identity brought about only by YHWH's assurance of forgiveness and his return to the temple. It is only on this basis that it can be possible once again to encounter YHWH in the cult. Ezekiel 40–48 does not only pick up and develop Ezekiel 33–39, but it also contains several allusions to the first act, especially to the first temple vision in Ezekiel 8–11. The two most obvious allusions are:

<sup>22</sup> HÄNER, *Nachwirken*.

<sup>23</sup> HÄNER, *Nachwirken*, 542.

- Ezek 40,1-4 <sup>24</sup>: the dating in Ezek 40,1-4 alone is enough to cause the reader to recollect the first chapters of the book. An allusion to Ezek 1,1-3 is also created by means of the keywords: “exile” (גלות), “hand of YHWH” (יד זהוה), and “visions of God” (מראות אלהים). Yet the expressions “hand of YHWH” and the “visions of God” are also mentioned at the beginning of the first temple vision in 8,1-4. There, as in Ezek 40,1-4, the prophet is brought to Jerusalem (simply called the “city” in Ezekiel 40,1). The fact that the prophet is placed on a “high mountain” (הר גבה) links the text to the promise of salvation in Ezek 17,22-24, the only place where the same expression is used. Ezek 17,22-24 is further developed in Ezek 20,40-45. Häner concludes that Ezek 40,1-4 recalls the abominations committed by Israel in the first temple vision and the judgment involving the fall of Jerusalem, but also the forecast of the salvation that is related to the “high mountain”.
- Ezek 43,1-9 <sup>25</sup>: In Ezek 43,3 (“just like the vision that I had seen before”) we find an explicit reference to the temple vision in Ezekiel 8–11. Ezek 43,4-5, a passage reporting the return of the glory of YHWH to the temple from the East, has several verbal allusions to Ezekiel 8–11, a passage describing the departure of the glory from that location. Ezek 43,7-9 calls to mind the abominations that were committed in Jerusalem (the expression תועבות אשר עשו in Ezek 43,8b occurs several times in Ezekiel 8).

Tobias Häner has provided a more detailed outline of the allusions to Ezekiel 8–11 in Ezek 40,1-5 and 43,1-9. Yet the hints provided here suffice to indicate that the temple vision of Ezekiel 40–48 should be read in the light of the earlier visions and promises in the Book of Ezekiel. Indeed, according to Ezek 43,10, Ezekiel has to inform the house of Israel of the shape of the temple (which refers back to Ezekiel 40–42), “that they may be ashamed of their iniquities”, and according to Ezek 43,11 he has to teach them the statutes and instructions of the temple (which point forward to Ezekiel 44–46), “so that they may observe all its laws and all its statutes and carry them out”. Ezek 43,12 should thus be understood as an introductory formula to what follows <sup>26</sup>. It is therefore very clear that the temple vision in Ezekiel 40–48 should be read in the light of the abominations mentioned earlier in the Book of Ezekiel, especially in the light of the former temple vision in Ezekiel 8–11.

<sup>24</sup> See HÄNER, *Nachwirken*, 522-524.

<sup>25</sup> See HÄNER, *Nachwirken*, 524-526.

<sup>26</sup> See ALLEN, *Ezekiel*, 249.

Ezek 43,10-11 raises two questions that might help us understand Ezek 44,6-14. First, why should the house of Israel be ashamed of their iniquities when they see the plans and the shape of this new temple (v.10)? Second, how do the laws and statutes contribute to the further avoidance of abominations after the return of the glory of YHWH? The key to the first question lies in the new features of this new temple in comparison with the first temple, namely the distinction between the inner and the outer court. In the new temple, the house of Israel was no longer allowed to enter the area of the altar; this shall be their shame <sup>27</sup>. As such, the answer to the second question is that the laws and statutes serve to preserve the holiness of the inner court of the temple by preventing everything that is profane (including the people of Israel and even the Levites) from coming into contact with that which is holy. The opposite is also true. As demonstrated in, e.g., Ezek 42,13-14, these laws prevent everything that is holy from leaving the inner court and thus coming into contact with that which is profane.

This suggestion is supported by Ezek 44,4-5, the two verses that introduce the following verses. According to 44,4a, the prophet is brought to the northern gate, the place where Ezekiel 8 locates the first case of idolatry in (Ezek 8,5-6). There, he sees the glory of YHWH (44,4b) filling the temple after it has returned (Ezek 43,1-12), just as he had seen the glory of YHWH in the temple in Ezek 8,4 before it left the temple in 11,22-23. Afterwards, Ezek 44,5 announces the statutes (חֻקֹּת) and instructions (תּוֹרֹת) of the temple and calls attention to the entrance of the temple and all the exits of the sanctuary; this is a clear back reference to Ezek 43,11. The text therefore provides the reader with a very clear connection between Ezekiel 43 and 8–11: The statutes and instructions regarding the entrances and the exits in the light of the return of the glory of YHWH are related to the abominations of Ezekiel 8; their purpose is to avoid another defilement of the sanctuary.

## II. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EZEK 44,6-8 AND 9-14

Thilo A. Rudnig notes that scholars consider Ezek 44,6-14 to be a unity, with Ezek 44,6-8 functioning as a word of reproach and 9-14 as a word of judgment <sup>28</sup>. However, Rudnig challenges this concept of the text's unity on the base of the following observations <sup>29</sup>:

<sup>27</sup> Cf. DUKE, "Punishment", 63.

<sup>28</sup> RUDNIG, *Heilig*, 205.

<sup>29</sup> RUDNIG, *Heilig*, 205-207.



- There is a change of person between Ezek 44,6-8 (2.P.Pl.) and Ezek 44,9-14 (3.P.).
- Given that Ezek 44,6-8 concerns the Israelites, one would expect the word of judgment in Ezek 44,9-14 to concern the Israelites as well; yet the judgment seems to concern the Levites only.
- Although the idea of judgment is present in 9-14, the main focus is on cultic instructions.
- The reason for the judgment in 9-14 (idolatry) is not the same as the accusation in 6-8 (access of foreigners to the sanctuary).

Rudnig has recently been followed by Nathan MacDonald, who has added the following argument:

Thirdly, we would expect the reproach to refer to past transgressions and the word of judgment to draw future consequences. In fact, the word of judgment moves repeatedly between past and future. The verses oscillate between past actions, typically expressed with *qatal* and *wayyiqtol* forms (vv. 10a, 12a, ba, 13bβ), and the consequences that are to result, expressed with *weqatal* and *yiqtol* forms (vv. 10b-11, 12bβ-13ba, 14) <sup>30</sup>.

Both Rudnig and MacDonald immediately call for a diachronic solution to this problem without even trying to read the text synchronically. Yet their solutions differ in that Rudnig presents a literary-critical solution, while MacDonald's solution is based on inner-biblical interpretation. According to him, an original oracle (44,6-7\*.9\*.15\*) interpreted Isaiah 56, while a later extension (44,7\*.8.10-14.15\*.16-19) interpreted Numbers 18 and Ezekiel 14.

Although it certainly makes sense to inquire into possible inner-biblical sources, the first interpretive step should be to try and understand the logic of the text on a synchronic level. The following observations should be taken into consideration:

- On a synchronic level, the change of person from 2.P. to 3.P. simply means that when the 2.P. is used somebody is being addressed directly, whereas when the 3.P. is being used someone is being spoken of indirectly. Since the change of person coincides with the change of subject (2.P.: Israelites; 3.P.: Levites and Priests) there is no formal problem with the change of person on a synchronic level; with the reference to the duties of the Levites and Priests in 9-16, it is still the house of Israel that is being addressed.

<sup>30</sup> MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 22.

- Even if one tries to separate 9-14 from 6-8 by means of diachronic explanation, the fact remains that v. 9 takes up the issue of 6-8 (foreigners) while v.10 (כִּי אֵם) links the issue of the foreigners with the issue of the Levites. The text therefore obviously intends to link these two issues and so the task of the exegete must be to try to understand this linkage.
- The place of Ezek 44,6-14 within the book as a whole supports the view of Rudnig that Ezek 4,9-14 cannot be a word of judgment <sup>31</sup>. Ezekiel 40–48 forms the fifth act of the book of Ezekiel. Israel's abominations were judged when the glory of YHWH left the temple. But now the glory of YHWH has returned. The context of Ezekiel 44 is not judgment but restoration. The sins that were judged shall not be judged a second time. According to Ezek 44,5 the speech is not about judgment but about the entrance and exits of the sanctuary and the need to stop the former abominations from ever being committed again.

On the basis of these observations we will now interpret Ezekiel 44,6-14 in the context of the Book of Ezekiel as a whole.

### III. EZEK 44,6-8: THE ABOMINATIONS OF ISRAEL

A reader who peruses Ezek 44,6-14 within the narrative framework sketched out above, namely that the glory of YHWH has returned to the temple and that the law of the temple is now being given so that the former abominations that had led to the fall of the temple and to the departure of the glory of YHWH will be avoided, this reader will not first think of stories from the Pentateuch or the Book of Kings when he reads the accusations against the house of Israel and the Levites. According to Ezek 44,4, the prophet is brought to the north gate in front of the temple where he had previously seen the first abomination (Ezekiel 8,3-6). Ezek 44,6 addresses the house of Israel as a whole <sup>32</sup> and calls them "rebellious" (מָרִי). This is the same term used in Ezek 12,2.3.9.25, immediately after the departure of the glory of YHWH from the temple. According to Ezek 44,7-8, the house of Israel as a whole is responsible for the following abominations:

<sup>31</sup> RUDNIG, *Heilig*, 206.

<sup>32</sup> DUGUID, *Ezekiel*, 75-76, rightly states that the "first point to notice about this chapter is that the object of critique is not simply the Levites but the entire house of Israel". See also McCONVILLE, "Priests and Levites", 26; DUKE, "Punishment", 69.

- They allowed foreigners <sup>33</sup>, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to enter the sanctuary <sup>34</sup>.
- They broke God's covenant.
- They did not guard the holy items <sup>35</sup> but set foreigners as guards of the sanctuary instead.

While the term *תועבה* (“abomination”) that designates the sin of the house of Israel in Ezek 44,6-7 is used throughout the Book of Ezekiel and thus fits the sin described in Ezekiel 8–11, where the term is used seven times, Ezekiel 8–11 makes no mention of foreigners <sup>36</sup>. This might be the reason why scholars mostly have looked outside the book to identify the sin of the house of Israel.

In Ezekiel 8 the prophet witnesses the following abominations:

- An idol-image <sup>37</sup> stands in the northern entrance of the temple (vv.3-5).
- The house of Israel is guilty of committing abominations with this idol-image (v.6).
- Seventy elders of Israel are worshipping several idols (vv.10-11).
- Women are weeping for Tammuz (v.14) <sup>38</sup>.
- Twenty-five men, who are identified in Ezek 11,1 as leaders of the people, are worshipping the sun (v.16).

Is it possible that Ezek 44,7-8 is referring back to the abominations of Ezekiel 8? As demonstrated above, by means of intra-textual allusions

<sup>33</sup> Some scholars (see COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”, 198, n. 15) have argued that *בני נכר* does not necessarily mean ethnic non-Israelites but might refer to any non-belonger. However, since the text underlines that they are uncircumcised not only in heart but also in flesh, it is difficult to interpret them only as Israelites who were not Levites or priests.

<sup>34</sup> N.J. WARREN, “‘The Sin of the Sanctuary’ and the Referent of *מקדש* in Ezekiel 44”, *BBR* 25 (2015) 311-323, has recently argued that Ezekiel 44 says nothing about the foreigner's exclusion from the outer court of the temple complex in general, but, rather, refers to the inner court.

<sup>35</sup> See the interpretation of the plural *קדשי* in GUNNEWEG, *Leviten*, 191: “Überhaupt bedeutet *קדש*, anders als *מקדש*, mehr das Heilige, die Heiligkeit und kann darum, verbunden mit einem anderen Substantiv im Status constructus, im Sinne eines Adjektivs gebraucht werden: *בגדי קדש* (heilige Kleider), *כלי קדש* (heilige Geräte) usw. Die Mehrzahl meint immer [...] die heiligen, Jahwe geweihten Gaben [...]”.

<sup>36</sup> In fact, in the Book of Ezekiel the expression *בני נכר* (plural or singular) only occurs in Ezek 44,7,9.

<sup>37</sup> The term *סמל* occurs only five times in the Old Testament: Deut 4,16, Ezek 8,3,5; 2 Chr 33,7,15.

<sup>38</sup> For the identity of Tammuz, who is only attested here in the Old Testament, see K.-F. POHLMANN, *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel (Ezechiel) Kapitel 1–19* (ATD 22/1; Göttingen 1996) 140.

Ezek 43,1-11 and 44,4-5 clearly introduce the following speech (Ezek 44,6 – 45,8) in light of the temple vision of Ezekiel 8–11. This suggests that it is the abominations of Ezekiel 8 that the reader should have in mind when reading Ezek 44,7-8. This raises the question, however, of why Ezekiel 8 makes no mention of foreigners, whereas Ezek 44,7-8 takes their access to the sanctuary to be the main problem. It is clear that the mention of foreigners in Ezek 44,7-8 cannot be regarded as a literary allusion to Ezekiel 8. There is no clear hint in Ezekiel 8 that the abominations have something to do with foreigners. This means that Ezek 44,7-8 should be taken as an interpretation of Ezekiel 8, one that goes a step beyond what Ezekiel 8 states. The simplest way to imagine Ezek 44,7-8 doing this is to hold foreigners responsible for bringing the idol-image of Ezek 8,3-5 and possibly also the other idols (vv.10-11), the Tammuz-cult (v.14), and the sun worship (v.16) into the temple. Perhaps this is why Ezek 44,7-8 takes the main problem to be the gate and the deficient guarding of the temple, for these should have kept the foreigners out. When Ezek 44,7 recalls the breaking of God's covenant, it is clear that this covenant could not have been broken by foreigners because this covenant is between God and Israel; this can be seen in Ezekiel 16 (and 17), where the breaking of God's covenant plays a central role (these verses also allude to Ezekiel 8–11). Thus, rather than the foreigners in Ezek 44,7-8 being the ones who have committed the abominations, they are the ones who have caused the Israelites to commit the abominations. To summarize, in the center of the accusation of Ezek 44,7-8 Israel is rebuked for breaking the covenant, which in the first instance is a reference to earlier chapters in the book (16–17), chapters which interpret the abominations of Ezekiel 8 in terms of covenant <sup>39</sup>.

That the abominations have something to do with foreigners is already stated in Ezekiel 23, where we find several parallels to Ezekiel 44. Alice Hunt has identified the following <sup>40</sup>: the defilement of the sanctuary, the issue of the Sabbath, idols, "my house", concern with foreigners, abominations, and blood. As such, Ezek 44,6-8 is not the only place in the Book of Ezekiel where foreigners play a role in Israel's abominations. In Ezekiel 23 the two sisters Oholah (Samaria) and Oholiba (Jerusalem) are accused of committing several abominations, including their defilement of the sanctuary (23,38) and their sending for men to come from afar — men who then came (23,40). Ezek 44,6-8 is therefore not the only place in the

<sup>39</sup> The idea of covenant in Ezekiel 16–17 might come from Leviticus 26, cf. HÄNER, *Nachwirken*, 278-289.

<sup>40</sup> HUNT, *Missing Priests*, 141-142.

whole book where the defilement of the sanctuary, first described in Ezekiel 8, is somehow related to foreigners. Although the term *בני נכר* is not used for the “men who came from afar” (*אנשים באים ממרחק*) in Ezekiel 23, there is a lexical connection between Ezek 44,7-8 and 23,38-39. The former section speaks of foreigners being admitted “to be in *my sanctuary* to profane it, *my house*”, the latter accuses the two sisters of having “defiled *my sanctuary* on the same day and *profaned* my Sabbath” (v.38), with v.39 announcing what they did “in *my house*”, namely they “called for men to come from afar” and they came (v.40). Even if these men are not designated as “foreigners” (*בני נכר*), it is quite fair to assume that Ezek 44,7-8 is referring back to Ezek 23,38-40 on a lexical level, with Ezek 23,40 being summarized by the term “foreigners”. If we accept this textual allusion to Ezek 23,38-40, it becomes clear that Ezek 44,7-8 interprets the abominations of Ezekiel 8 in light of Ezek 23,38-40.

If Ezek 44,7-8 is related to Ezekiel 8 in this sense, then it is also possible to take other references to the foreigners in other biblical texts into consideration. To give an example, scholars occasionally connect Ezek 44,8 with 2 Kgs 11,4-8, where “Carians, members of the royal guard in Jerusalem who had originally come from Asia Minor <sup>41</sup>”, are set as guards of the temple of YHWH by Jehoiada <sup>42</sup>. Ezek 44,8 might be referring to these Carians in a historical sense (if a temple guard of foreigners formed by Carians existed), but this would hardly be a case of inner-biblical interpretation. There is no evidence on the level of the text that Ezek 44,8 is trying to draw the reader’s attention to 2 Kings 11 as an intertext.

To summarize, the meaning of Ezek 44,6-8 is simply that the abominations of Ezekiel 8 were caused by foreigners being granted access into the temple building (cf. Ezekiel 23) where they enticed the Israelites to commit idolatry and to break God’s covenant (cf. Ezekiel 16). The sin is attributed to Israel, not to the foreigners. By restricting entrance to the sanctuary, the architecture and rule of the new temple function to prevent such abominations from ever being committed again. These observations take us to vv.9-14.

#### IV. EZEK 44,9-14: THE LEVITES AS GUARDS

Contrary to exegesis in the tradition of Wellhausen, the new thing that Ezekiel 44 is dealing with is neither the distinction between priests and Levites nor the degradation of the Levites; rather, it is the differentiation

<sup>41</sup> BLOCK, *Ezekiel*, 622.

<sup>42</sup> Thus, e.g., ALLEN, *Ezekiel*, 261; DUGUID, *Ezekiel*, 76; BLOCK, *Ezekiel*, 622-623.

of the temple court into an inner and an outer court with the effect that the altar now belongs to the holy area. This raises the question of who is allowed to enter the inner court. This is important for a correct understanding of Ezek 44,9-11, especially v. 10.

What does כִּי אֲנִי (“rather”, “but”, “on the contrary”) in v.10 serve to contrast? It is usually understood in the following sense: that for which the foreigners were responsible is now the responsibility of the Levites instead. This is then interpreted either in light of v.8 to mean that the Levites instead of the foreigners will be the guards of the sanctuary<sup>43</sup>, or that the Levites instead of the foreigners will be allowed to enter the sanctuary<sup>44</sup>. Both interpretations raise serious problems. On the one hand, the problem with the first interpretation, asserting that it is the Levites rather than the foreigners who will be guards of the sanctuary, is that כִּי אֲנִי refers not to שָׁמֶר (“guard”, v.8) but rather to בָּאוּ (“enter”, v.9). The issue here is not that the foreigners shall not guard the sanctuary but that they shall not enter it. On the other hand, the problem with the latter interpretation, asserting that the Levites instead of the foreigners are allowed to enter the sanctuary, is that Ezek 44,12-14 explains the service of the Levites in light of their sin. This raises the question as to why the Levites should be honored for their sin by being granted access to the sanctuary. Furthermore, Ezek 44,13 explicitly forbids the Levites from coming near to YHWH, which is the exclusive task of the priests. There is a third possible interpretation of the text which not only fits the sense of the passage as a whole but also does justice to the wording. This interpretation can best be shown alongside the two rejected interpretations:

- a. The foreigners shall not **guard** the sanctuary; rather, the Levites shall **guard** the sanctuary
- b. The foreigners shall not enter into the sanctuary; rather, the Levites shall enter into the sanctuary
- c. The foreigners shall not enter into the sanctuary; rather, the Levites shall **guard** the sanctuary

<sup>43</sup> Thus GESE, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 58.

<sup>44</sup> Thus, e.g., DUKE, “Punishment”, 71, who adds the verb “enter” in his translation in brackets: “[...] but, rather, the Levites [will enter], who went far from me [...]”. The same applies to DUGUID, *Ezekiel*, 77; COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”, 200; BLOCK, *Ezekiel*, 624; MILGROM, “Ezekiel”, 6; MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 38; WARREN, “Sin of the Sanctuary”, 319. According to RUDNIG, *Heilig*, 284, v.11 is a new sentence, which leads to the same reading, that not the foreigners but the Levites shall enter the sanctuary.

The point of sentence (c) is that the Levites are in fact not commanded to do something instead of the foreigners <sup>45</sup>. Rather, they are commanded to do something against the former practice of the foreigners. Verse 9 forbids the foreigners from entering the sanctuary, and, in contrast, vv.10-11 command the Levites to guard the doors (outside the inner court). Thus, neither the foreigners nor the Levites are allowed to enter the inner court, but the Levites have the task of guarding the doors that lead to the inner court <sup>46</sup>. Verse 11b does not allow the Levites to render any priestly service. According to Ezek 40,39-43, the act of slaughtering takes place at the vestibule of the door that leads to the inner court and is, therefore, a Levitical task. As such, the Levites in Ezek 44,11 are being commanded not only to be guards outside the inner court but also to perform there the ministry of slaughtering. The priests, on the other hand, have the task of offering sacrifices within the inner court at the altar (Ezek 44,15-16).

Therefore, Ezek 44,12-14 does not explain why the Levites are commanded to do something instead of the foreigners; rather, these verses explain why the Levites have to do guard duty and some lower ministry outside the inner court (which did not exist in the former temple as a court separated from the outer court) without having permission to enter the inner court.

To sum up what has been discussed so far: the new element is the distinction between the inner and the outer courts, or, more to the point, the new element is that the altar now belongs to the sacred space of the temple building and no longer to the space of the temple's court yard. It is clear that the foreigners and the house of Israel are not allowed to enter the inner court, and it is equally clear that the priests are allowed to enter it. The question is: what about the Levites? Do they belong on the side of the priests and serve the priests (and thus enter the sanctuary together with the priests), or do they belong on the side of the people and serve the people (and thus stay outside the sanctuary together with the people)? The answer is that the Levites belong to the side of the people whom they "serve" (Ezek 44,11a). But why?

If we search the Book of Ezekiel for a reference to the sin of the Levites we do not find any mention of the Levites at all. Ezek 44,10 states that the Levites went far from YHWH "when Israel went astray". Here reference is made to an event that the reader is presupposed to already know. We can

<sup>45</sup> Cf. KONKEL, *Architektur*, 105.

<sup>46</sup> I agree with WARREN, "Sin of the Sanctuary", 311-323, that Ezek 44,9 does not exclude the foreigners from the whole temple area but only from the inner court. However, I do not agree that the inner court is "the realm of the Priests and Levites" (322). Rather, it is the realm only of the priests.



therefore ask: when did Israel go astray? In Ezekiel 1–39, the verb תַּעֲזֶה (“go astray”) occurs only once, namely in Ezek 14,11. There it is stated that the house of Israel went astray in the past. Ezek 14,1–11 in turn refers back to Ezekiel 8 (cf. 14,1 and 8,1 where the elders sit before the prophet)<sup>47</sup>. But there are several other verbal echoes in Ezek 44,9–11 of Ezek 14,1–11, e.g. “idols” and “bearing guilt”<sup>48</sup>. If Ezek 44,10 is referring via Ezek 14,1–11 to Ezekiel 8, which is when the house of Israel went astray, it is ascribing a co-responsibility for this event to the Levites. What might their responsibility have been? The answer to this question is quite simple: the claim that the Levites “went far from YHWH” is not meant spiritually but quite literally, for they left the sanctuary they should have been guarding. In Ezekiel, the verb רָחַק (“be/go away”) always refers to physical distance from the sanctuary (8,6; 11,15–16; 43,9). Thus, according to Ezek 44,10, the Levites left the sanctuary and neglected their guard duty when Israel strayed after their idols, as described in Ezekiel 8.

Many scholars since Hartmut Gese<sup>49</sup> have pointed to the relationship between Numbers 18 and Ezekiel 44. More recently, scholars, such as Fishbane<sup>50</sup>, Cook<sup>51</sup>, and MacDonald<sup>52</sup>, have argued that Ezekiel 44 is an inner-biblical interpretation of Numbers 16(–18). In a straightforward way this would mean that Ezek 44,9–14 intends to identify the past sin of the Levites who “had gone far from YHWH” with Korah’s rebellion. This is indeed what Cook seems to suggest when he writes that the “*traditum* and direct referent of Ezekiel 44 is an authoritative description of a wilderness conflict, not any actual priestly conflict in Israelite history”<sup>53</sup>. This raises the question as to whether there are any hints that Ezek 44,9–14 identifies the past sin of the Levites with Korah’s rebellion. In Numbers 18, the distinction between the Levites and the priests is clarified as a reaction to Korah’s rebellion in Numbers 16–17. According to Numbers 16, Korah and his sons, who were Levites, stood up against Moses together with 250 leaders of the people, reminiscent of the 25 leaders of the people mentioned in Ezek 8,16 and 11,1. According to Num 16,3, they said that

<sup>47</sup> Cf. HÄNER, *Nachwirken*, 276: “Durch die Parallele von 8,1 und 14,1 wirkt die Schau der kultischen Vergehen, die dem Propheten in 8,5–18 zuteil wird, als Hintergrund in 14,1–11 mit ein, wodurch zur Geltung gebracht wird, dass die Exilierten Anteil haben an den in Tempelnähe begangenen Gräueln, da sie die ‘Götzen’, die dort verehrt werden, ‘auf ihren Herzen’ tragen”.

<sup>48</sup> For the relationship between Ezek 44,10–15a and Ezek 14,1–11 see MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 47–48.

<sup>49</sup> GESE, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 65–66.

<sup>50</sup> M. FISHBANE, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1985) 138–143.

<sup>51</sup> COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”.

<sup>52</sup> MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 41–47.

<sup>53</sup> COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”, 205.

the whole community is holy and therefore not only the priests can approach YHWH<sup>54</sup>. As a result of the rebellion, Num 18,1-7 makes clear that the priests are responsible for the sanctuary and the altar, while the Levites are responsible for the whole tabernacle (excluding the holy items).

Was Ezek 44,10 formulated in such a way that it clearly identifies the sin of the Levites with the rebellion of Korah? This is precisely what Cook argues for<sup>55</sup>. However, there are several reasons why this is unlikely. First, as argued above, the formulation of Ezek 44,10 has a referent in Ezek 14,11, which in turn leads to Ezekiel 8. Again, as argued above, within the context of the Book of Ezekiel the language of the Levites “going far from YHWH” refers to their leaving the sanctuary. According to Numbers 16–17, however, the sin of the Levites is just the opposite, namely their entrance into the sanctuary! Secondly, the Book of Numbers as a whole makes no use of the verb *הצת*, which is the term Ezek 44,10 uses to describe Israel’s sin. Thirdly, neither idolatry nor foreigners play a role in Numbers 16–17<sup>56</sup>. Cook’s explanation that neither “idols” nor “uncircumcised” (Ezek 44,7) need to be taken in a strictly literal sense<sup>57</sup> is hardly convincing.

However, this does not mean that there is no allusion to Numbers (16–)18 in Ezek 44,9-14 at all. I agree with those scholars who regard the links between Numbers 18, in particular, and Ezek 44,9-14 to be clear enough to indicate some kind of intended allusion. Furthermore, I follow the majority opinion in seeing Ezekiel 44 as being dependent on Numbers 18<sup>58</sup>. Yet the verbal allusions and conceptual links between the two texts do not function to identify the sin of the Levites but rather to restore the cultic order of the temple personnel, as described in Numbers 18. It seems that the author had tried to find a solution for his design of a restored temple service that was in accordance with the concepts of the Mosaic instructions. For this reason, he moved back and forth between Numbers 18 and

<sup>54</sup> Cf. GUNNEWEG, *Leviten*, 176: “Ihre Empörung besteht also nicht darin, dass sie eigenmächtig priesterliche Funktionen ausüben oder auch nur ausüben wollen, sondern dass sie einen anderen Heiligkeitsbegriff vertreten”.

<sup>55</sup> COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”, 199.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 26.

<sup>57</sup> COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”, 200.

<sup>58</sup> I do not attempt here to give new arguments for the direction of dependence between Numbers 18 and Ezekiel 44, namely for the priority of Numbers 18. As KONKEL, *Architektonik*, 308, states, all positions since Gese’s study in 1957 agree that Numbers 18 antedates Ezekiel 44 at least traditio-historically. There is therefore no need to repeat the arguments here. The assessments of the direction of dependence between Numbers 18 and Ezekiel 44, which come to the conclusion that Ezekiel 44 depends on Numbers 18 (at least in general) include: GUNNEWEG, *Leviten*, 198-203; ABBA, “Priests”, 6-9; FISHBANE, *Biblical Interpretation*, 138-143; DUKE, “Levites”, 64-75; COOK, “Innerbiblical Interpretation”; BLOCK, *Ezekiel*, 628-629; RUDNIG, *Heilig*, 295-304; KONKEL, *Architektonik*, 311-313; MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 41-47.

Ezekiel 14, as MacDonald has convincingly demonstrated <sup>59</sup>. This means that the reader is drawn to Ezekiel 14 with regard to the sin of Israel going astray (44,10), but he is drawn to Numbers 18 with regard to the cultic order with its distinction between priests and Levites. In other words: Ezekiel 44 does indeed depend conceptually on Numbers 18, but it does not accuse the Levites of committing the sins of Korah's rebellion. Rather, it blames the Levites for having left their guard duty at the sanctuary in the context of the sins described in Ezekiel 8. The defilement of the sanctuary led to the division of the temple court into an inner court and an outer court, whereby the altar is made inaccessible to the people. As a result of their sin and in agreement with Numbers 18 the Levites may not enter the area of the altar in the inner court; instead, they must be guards on the outer side of the doors that lead to the inner court <sup>60</sup>.

## V. CONCLUSION

To conclude, a synchronic reading of Ezek 44,6-14 that takes into account the whole context of the Book of Ezekiel makes good sense of the text. On this reading, the house of Israel is being addressed concerning entrance into and exit from the sanctuary. Because the sanctuary was defiled, the altar is now made inaccessible to the people. The cause of the defilement of the sanctuary (Ezekiel 8), which is formulated in terms of the breaking of God's covenant (as in Ezekiel 16), is that foreigners (cf. Ezekiel 23) entered the sanctuary due to the Levites going far from YHWH, which means that they neglected their guard duty (when Israel went astray; Ezekiel 14). The house of Israel is thus now told that although the Levites shall resume their guard duty, due to their sin (and in conceptual accordance with the Mosaic instructions in Numbers 18) they shall be excluded from the altar area like the lay people, and they shall serve these people on the outer side of the doors that lead to the inner court (cf. Ezek 44,11 with Ezek 40,38-43).

As long as Ezek 44,6-14 is read as an isolated text and related to events recounted in Old Testament texts outside of the Book of Ezekiel

<sup>59</sup> MACDONALD, *Priestly Rule*, 49-51.

<sup>60</sup> It does not fit the context, therefore, to suggest, as DUKE, "Punishment", 70 does, that this is a restoration of the Levites rather than their punishment. The point is not that the Levites are allowed to perform some prestigious tasks instead of the foreigners, but rather that, in light of the new distinction between the inner and outer court, they are excluded from entering the inner court due to their past sin that led to the contemporary state of abomination.

the proposed solutions will be beset with insurmountable problems. If, on the other hand, Ezekiel 44 is primarily read against the background of the rest of the Book of Ezekiel, the other inner-biblical allusions find their right place.

Staatsunabhängige Theologische Hochschule Basel Benjamin KILCHÖR \*  
Mühlestiegrain, 50  
CH – 4125 Riehen (Switzerland)

#### SUMMARY

This paper argues that the primary referent of Ezek 44,6-14 is located in the former chapters of the Book of Ezekiel (esp. Ezekiel 8) rather than in historical events or biblical texts outside of the book of Ezekiel. On this reading, Ezek 44,6-14 not only refers to Ezekiel 8 in a direct way, but it also takes into account the interpretations that Ezekiel 8 has received in Ezek 14,1-11 (the house of Israel went astray), Ezek 16,58-63 (the abominations broke God's covenant with Israel), and Ezek 23,38-42 (the defilement of the sanctuary has to do with foreigners).

\* This article was written in my quality of Research Associate in the Department of Ancient Languages and Cultures of the University of Pretoria (RSA). I am grateful to Phil Botha and Phil Sumpter for proofreading the paper.

## THE BELLIGERENT WOMAN IN SONG 1,9 \*

During the last decades, the metaphors of the Hebrew Bible have been thoroughly and extensively researched, especially in light of the achievements of modern Linguistics and in particular of Cognitive Linguistics <sup>1</sup>. While a major focus of modern scholarship has been on the cognitive dimension of metaphor, Steen underscored that the complexity of literary metaphor requires a multi-level approach <sup>2</sup>. According to the author, metaphor studies should include cognitive analysis without neglecting other fundamental aspects, such as grammar and syntax, stylistic features and communicative goals. As a result, Steen proposed a three-dimensional model, extending the analysis of poetic metaphors to their (1) literary expressions, (2) underlying and resulting conceptualizations, and (3) pragmatic purposes.

Guided by Steen's proposal, the following provides an analysis of Song 1,9 in which the female character is metaphorized as a mare among Pharaoh's chariots. This paper aims to establish and clarify the military meaning of the metaphor in question, on which current scholarship largely disagrees <sup>3</sup>. On the one hand, some exegetes read the metaphor as having a military meaning. According to Pope, who is followed by many scholars, Song 1,9 alludes to the practice of sending an oestrous mare among

\* We would like to thank Prof. Dr. Francis Landy for carefully reading an earlier draft of this article and offering many valuable comments and suggestions.

<sup>1</sup> See T.M. SHERMAN, "Biblical Metaphor Annotated Bibliography" (2014): [https://www.academia.edu/9577749/Biblical\\_Metaphor\\_Annotated\\_Bibliography](https://www.academia.edu/9577749/Biblical_Metaphor_Annotated_Bibliography) [access 29/11/2016].

<sup>2</sup> G.J. STEEN, "Metaphor and Style", *The Cambridge Handbook of Stylistics* (eds. P. STOCKWELL – S. WHITELEY) (Cambridge 2014) 315-328; ID., "The Paradox of Metaphor: Why We Need a Three-Dimensional Model of Metaphor", *Metaphor and Symbol* 23 (2008) 213-241; ID., *Understanding Metaphor in Literature. An Empirical Approach* (Studies in Language and Linguistics; London 1994).

<sup>3</sup> Strictly speaking, Song 1,9 contains a simile rather than a metaphor. According to Croft-Cruise the fundamental differences between metaphor and simile are twofold: (1) while metaphor is usually expressed in terms of "A is B" and predicates some properties of A in light of B, simile is expressed in terms of "A is like B", asserting a resemblance between the domains in question; (2) while in metaphor the conceptual element/s that play/s a role between A and B is/are not provided, the vast majority of similes specify the property respect to which "A is like B". However, some similes are more "metaphor like", presenting an "open mapping". See W. CROFT – A.D. CRUSE, *Cognitive Linguistics* (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics; Cambridge 2004) 211-221. Song 1,9 presents such a case of "open mapping", so that it will be considered as "metaphor like".

enemy cavalry in order to create confusion among horses, as happened during an Egyptian military campaign of Thutmose III <sup>4</sup>. Pope suggested that, in Song 1,9 the man is describing his beloved as able to drive men crazy, arousing their sexual desire. However suggestive this interpretation may appear, there is no evidence of such a military expedient either in Song 1,9 or in other texts of the Hebrew Bible. Although “absence of evidence” is not necessarily “evidence of absence”, it still makes scholarly argumentation extremely conjectural. Barbiero rightly underscored that the mention of the woman’s cheeks, neck and jewels in Song 1,10 suggests that the focus of Song 1,9 lies on her aesthetic appearance, and that Song 1,11 calls to mind the pompous decorations of Egyptian military cavalry <sup>5</sup>. Unfortunately, Barbiero did not develop his interpretation, explaining for instance which particular aspects of the woman’s beauty are foregrounded by the metaphor of the mare and what such a metaphor adds to the Song’s description of its female character. Moreover, the author’s statement that the emphasis is placed on the aesthetic aspect, rather than on the erotic <sup>6</sup>, separates between two dimensions (i.e. aesthetic and erotic) that in the Song are closely interwoven. Landy’s comment is also notable since it makes it clear the complexity of the metaphor of Song 1,9. While the author recognizes that the military image of a mare emphasizes the powerful attractiveness of the woman, at the same time he argues that “it hints at her proper subservience, as a member of the king’s entourage, as adornment to his court” <sup>7</sup>. Likewise, Thöne has more recently suggested that the image evokes “a strong and precious being but one simultaneously under male command” <sup>8</sup>. Although the Song’s metaphors may be very dense, combining many, different meanings, we will suggest that in Song 1,9 the concept of “submission”, suggested by Landy and Thöne, is not present. Said in Cognitive Linguistics’ terms, it is not “highlighted”. On the other hand, many other exegetes reject military readings of Song 1,9. Fox, for instance, argued that in the Hebrew Bible the lexemes “chariot” and

<sup>4</sup> M.H. POPE, *Song of Songs. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 7c; Garden City, NY 1977) 336-343. The same interpretation can be found in L. SCHWIENHORST-SCHÖNBERGER, *Das Hohelied der Liebe* (Freiburg 2015) 49; Y. ZAKOVITCH, *Das Hohelied* (HThK; Freiburg 2004) 127-128; O. KEEL, *Das Hohelied* (ZBK 18; Zürich 1986) 60-62.

<sup>5</sup> G. BARBIERO, *Cantico dei Cantici*. Nuova versione, introduzione e commento (I libri Biblici – Primo Testamento 24; Milano 2004) 77-79.

<sup>6</sup> BARBIERO, *Cantico*, 77.

<sup>7</sup> F. LANDY, *Beauty and the Enigma*. And Other Essays on the Hebrew Bible (JSOTSup 312; Sheffield 2001) 90.

<sup>8</sup> Y.S. THÖNE, “Female Humanness: Animal Imagery in the Song of Songs and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography”, *Journal for Semitics* 25 (2016) 389-408, here 389.

“horse” do not always have military meaning and, in his opinion, the line is rather to be considered as belonging to royal imagery <sup>9</sup>. Likewise, Garrett asserted that “[t]he text says nothing about a military setting for this verse” <sup>10</sup> and many scholars do not provide any martial interpretation <sup>11</sup>. We will suggest not only that Song 1,9 first and foremost requires a martial interpretation, but also that the opposition between military and royal imagery is deceptive, since the domains WAR and ROYALTY were tightly interlaced in the cultural experience and conceptual universe of the Ancient Near East.

Despite the fact that Black defines Song 1,9 as “almost incomprehensible” <sup>12</sup>, the guiding hypothesis of this paper is that Steen’s multi-level approach, mentioned above, can shed light on its meaning. First, we will investigate Song 1,9 with respect to its syntactic features, showing that the word order of the line underscores the importance of the metaphor of the mare (I). Secondly, we will argue that Song 1,9 contains a military metaphor and we will illustrate the conceptual relations between the domains employed, i.e. MILITARY MARE and WOMAN, suggesting that Song 1,9 conceptualizes the woman’s beauty as irresistible (II). Finally, we will illustrate that Song 1,9 conveys a novel, challenging conceptualization of the woman with respect to both its immediate context, i.e. the Song, and its broader literary context, i.e. the Hebrew Bible and cognate literature (III).

## I. SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

### Song 1,9

לססתי ברכבי פרעה דמיתך רעיתי

To a mare [that is] among Pharaoh’s chariots I liken you, my friend.

From a syntactic point of view, Song 1,9 presents a case of marked word order. In spite of some dissenting opinions, Biblical Hebrew is considered

<sup>9</sup> M.V. FOX, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison, WI 1985) 105.

<sup>10</sup> D.A. GARRETT, “Song of Songs”, *Song of Songs. Lamentations* (D.A. GARRETT – P.R. HOUSE) (WBC 23b; Nashville, TN 2004) 144.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, J. LUZARRAGA, *Cantar de los Cantares*. Sendas del amor (Nueva Biblia Española – Comentario teológico y literario; Estella 2005) 192-197; J.M. MUNRO, *Spikenard and Saffron*. The Imagery of the Song of Songs (JSOTSup 203; Sheffield 1995) 56-57; R.E. MURPHY, *The Song of Songs*. A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or the Song of Songs (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 1990) 134.

<sup>12</sup> F.C. BLACK, *The Artifice of Love*. Grotesque Bodies in the Song of Songs (LHBOTS 392; London 2009) 170.



a Verb-Subject-Object language, as Van Hecke illustrated <sup>13</sup>. When the verb is preceded by clause constituents, the word order is regarded as “marked” <sup>14</sup>, that is, the order formally indicates that the clause or one or more of its constituents have a specific (pragmatic) function. Marked word orders occur in every language, compare for example English “I don’t know that” to the marked “*That* I don’t know”.

Song 1,9 presents an example of marked word order, in which the verb is preceded by a fronted constituent (“to a mare”), which is itself modified by an adnominal phrase (“[that is] among Pharaoh’s chariots”). This non-default order calls for an explanation.

One option is that the marked word order indicates that a new textual unit starts here, as Lunn suggests <sup>15</sup>. Marking the start of a new section is indeed one of the common functions of marked word order <sup>16</sup>. Lunn’s reading implies that Song 1,9 does not continue the discourse of the preceding verse 1,8: while the latter is attributed to an unspecified voice, Song 1,9 is put in the mouth of the man (so also Keel, Garrett, Exum, Barbiero, and Auwers). It is often argued that the appellative “most beautiful among women” is used by the daughters of Jerusalem in the rest of the poem (Song 5,9; 6,1), proving that also 1,8 is pronounced by a chorus. Note also the *setumah* mark at the end of 1,8. Many others consider Song 1,8-9 together as belonging to the man’s speech, however (e.g. Fox, Murphy, Longman, and Zakovitch). Since Song 1,7 clearly addresses the man (“Tell me, O you whom my soul loves”), the reply in 1,8 might be attributed to him, with 1,9 continuing his discourse. Also in this case, the marked word order in 1,9 could be seen as indicating a new section, viz. within the man’s speech: after his indications to the woman on where to find him (v.8), he now turns to a description of her beauty (vv.9-11). To our understanding, there are no conclusive arguments to settle the discussion.

<sup>13</sup> P. VAN HECKE, *From Linguistics to Hermeneutics. A Functional and Cognitive Approach to Job 12–14* (SSN 55; Leiden 2011) 51-92.

<sup>14</sup> C. VAN DER MERWE – J.A. NAUDÉ – J.H. KROEZE, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (Biblical Languages, Hebrew 3; Sheffield 1999) § 46.1. See also W. GROSS, *Die Satzteilfolge im Verbalsatz alttestamentlicher Prosa*. Untersucht an den Büchern Dtn, Ri und 2Kön (FAT 17; Tübingen 1996) 81-142, 257-296; C. VAN DER MERWE, “Explaining Fronting in Biblical Hebrew”, *JNSL* 25 (1999) 173-186, here 173; JM §§ 155-156.

<sup>15</sup> N.P. LUNN, *Word-Order Variation in Biblical Hebrew Poetry*. Differentiating Pragmatic Poetics (Paternoster Biblical Monographs; Bletchley 2006) 223-224. A critical review of Lunn’s approach is offered in VAN HECKE, *From Linguistics to Hermeneutics*, 85-91.

<sup>16</sup> JM § 155 nd.

A second, pragmatic explanation for the marked word order is that it explicitly marks the fronted constituent as what is technically called the clause's Focus <sup>17</sup>, thereby highlighting the unexpected or remarkable nature of the comparison made in the clause. It indicates that the clause does not simply state that the man compares his beloved to a mare, but that of all things "it is to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots" that he compares her.

In addition, stylistic reasons are also to be taken into account. As Rosenbaum argued, indeed, the changes in word order might be the result of the author's choice to avoid common forms and trite expressions, building a "defamiliar word order" <sup>18</sup>, drawing attention to the content of the clause.

On the syntactic and stylistic level, therefore, Song 1,9 calls attention to the unexpected and exceptional metaphor of the mare among Pharaoh's chariots. In order to better comprehend the meaning of the metaphor in question, a semantic and conceptual investigation is required.

## II. SEMANTIC AND CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

In order to clarify the conceptualization of the woman as a military mare, the categories of "conceptual domains" and "meaning potential" (1) can be very helpful, as well as Cognitive Linguistics' studies on metaphorical phenomena (2).

### 1. *The Military Meaning of Song 1,9*

Since the 1960s Semantics has argued that the meaning of words cannot be separated from the semantic fields or domains to which they belong. A semantic field or domain can be defined as "a segment of

<sup>17</sup> It has been argued that Comparative Adjuncts often take marked positions in the clause by virtue of their role in the clause's Completive Focus, which is larger than that of other adjuncts. In clauses with a Comparative Adjunct, comparing one of the clause constituents to something else is one of the clauses focal points, and this is often indicated by a marked order. See VAN HECKE, *From Linguistics to Hermeneutics*, 189; 195-197.

<sup>18</sup> M. ROSENBAUM, *Word-Order Variation in Isaiah 40-55. A Functional Perspective* (SSN 36; Assen 1997) 149-208. For a discussion of Rosenbaum's position on defamiliar word orders, see VAN HECKE, *From Linguistics to Hermeneutics*, 68. Rosenbaum's idea is very close to the well-known concept of "defamiliarization" (*ostranenie*) described by Russian Formalism, according to which poetry often prefers unfamiliar, difficult forms and constructions in order to grab the reader's attention, slow down and prolong his reading experience, see T. EAGLETON, *How to Read a Poem* (Malden, MA 2007) 48-64; V. SHKLOVSKIJ, "Art as Technique", *Literary Theory. An Anthology* (eds. J. RIVKIN – M. RYAN) (Oxford 2004) 17-23; L. CRAWFORD, "Viktor Shklovskij: Différance in Defamiliarization", *Comparative Literature* 36 (1984) 209-219.

reality symbolized by a set of related words”<sup>19</sup>. Cognitive Semantics has further developed this basic assumption, clarifying that domains are not only linguistic structures but first and foremost conceptual representations of segments of experience<sup>20</sup>. Words express concepts that are tied together within a domain because the realities to which they refer are experienced together<sup>21</sup>. Furthermore, although a large spectrum of information can be conveyed by single lexemes, only a part of their meaning potential is activated within specific linguistic contexts. While “the meaning potential is all the information that the word has been used to convey”<sup>22</sup>, once a word is employed in a specific linguistic context only some conceptual aspects are, so to speak, “triggered”. As Allwood argues, the activation of the meaning potential of a lexeme does not depend on the lexeme as such, but mainly on the linguistic expression as a whole, and on the memory of past activations of that lexeme<sup>23</sup>.

The lexeme סוס, *horse*, used in Song 1,9, as such might indicate different kinds of horses. Nevertheless, it refers to generic, unspecified horses in only a few biblical texts, while it indicates military horses in the vast majority of its occurrences<sup>24</sup>. Likewise, whereas רכב, *chariot*, can indicate different kinds of chariots (e.g. for hunting, ceremonial occasions, transportation, etc.), it is mainly used in contexts of war<sup>25</sup>. Moreover, *horse* and *chariot* often occur together in the Hebrew Bible in war scenes and in some instances they might even be considered a hendiadys referring to military cavalry (e.g. Josh 11,4; Ps 76,7; Is 43,17). Several studies, moreover, showed that chariots were firstly used in order to provide mobility during battles, and that horses and chariots together were considered the most powerful and threatening weapons throughout the Ancient Near East<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> L.J. BRINTON, *The Structure of Modern English. A Linguistic Introduction* (Amsterdam 2000) 112.

<sup>20</sup> L. TALMY, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*. Vol. 1. Concept Structuring Systems. Vol. 2. Typology and Process in Concept Structuring (Cambridge, MA 2000).

<sup>21</sup> C.J. FILLMORE, “Frames and the Semantics of Understanding”, *Quaderni di Semantica* 6 (1985) 222-254.

<sup>22</sup> J. ALLWOOD, “Meaning Potential and Context: Some Consequences for the Analysis of Variation in Meaning”, *Cognitive Approaches to Lexical Semantics* (eds. H. CUYCKENS – R. DIRVEN – J.R. TAYLOR) (Cognitive Linguistics Research 23; Berlin 2003) 29-65, here 43.

<sup>23</sup> ALLWOOD, “Meaning Potential”, 43-45.

<sup>24</sup> F.J. STENDEBACH, “סוס”, *ThWAT* V, 782-791; R.B. CHISHOLM, “סוס”, *NIDOTTE* III, 6061.

<sup>25</sup> W.B. BARRICK – H. RINGGREN, “רכב”, *ThWAT* VII, 508-515; L. JONKER, “רכב”, *NIDOTTE* III, 8206.

<sup>26</sup> F. DE BACKER, “Evolution of War Chariot Tactics in the Ancient Near East”, *UF* 41 (2010) 29-41; N. TALLIS, “Ancient Near Eastern Warfare”, *The Ancient World at War*

Since the meaning potential of *horse* and *chariot* is broad, however, the question remains whether their frequent military meaning is also activated in Song 1,9. We suggest it is, taking into consideration the following arguments: (1) the combination of the terms *horse* and *chariots* and their collocation with the following *Pharaoh*, and (2) the occurrences of the three lexemes together in other military texts, i.e. by what Allwood calls “the memory of past activations”<sup>27</sup>. Pharaoh’s cavalry is mentioned in a number of texts of the Hebrew Bible, referring to Egypt’s military power and to the strength of its cavalry (e.g. Deut 11,3-4; Is 43,17; Ps 136,15). The three terms *horse*, *chariot*, and *Pharaoh* are found together in one of the most emblematic war scenes in the Hebrew Bible, namely the story of the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14-15). Here one finds a reference to “all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots”, (Ex 14,9); “all Pharaoh’s horses and his chariot” (Ex 14,23), “Pharaoh’s horse with his chariot” (Ex 15,19)<sup>28</sup>.

The objection, mentioned above, that Song 1,9 actually refers to royal imagery seems to overlook the fact that the conceptual domains ROYALTY and MILITARY CAVALRY were by no means distant in the Ancient Near Eastern milieu. While the two domains in question are not associated in the modern, western world, so that the Queen of England and the King of Belgium do not immediately evoke concepts such as army tanks or military weapons, in the Ancient Near East kings were warriors and their armies were expressions and tools of their royal dominion. As Cantrell showed, literary mentions of horses and chariots, as well as their iconographic representations, parades and lavish adornments constituted a widespread rhetoric that aimed to establish and exhibit royal power<sup>29</sup>. The conceptual domain MILITARY CAVALRY, therefore, is not to be considered either opposed or an alternative to the conceptual domain ROYALTY, rather as part of it.

(ed. P. DE SOUZA) (New York 2008) 47-66; S. DALLEY, “Ancient Mesopotamian Military Organization”, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (ed. J.M. SASSON) (New York 1995) 413-422; Y. YADIN, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands in the Light of Archaeological Discovery* (London 1963).

<sup>27</sup> ALLWOOD, “Meaning Potential”, 43.

<sup>28</sup> This entails that the aforementioned texts chronologically precede the composition of the Song that we collocate in the Hellenistic period, due to the late linguistic features of the poem’s language. See F.W. DOBBS-ALLSOPP, “Late Linguistic Features in the Song of Songs”, *Perspectives on the Song of Songs/Perspektiven der Hoheliedauslegung* (ed. A.C. HAGEDORN) (BZAW 346; Berlin 2005) 27-77.

<sup>29</sup> D. O’D. CANTRELL, “‘Some Trust in Horses’: Horses as Symbols of Power in Rhetoric and Reality”, *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (eds. B.E. KELLE – F.R. AMES – J.L. WRIGHT) (Ancient Israel and Its Literature 18; Atlanta, GA 2014) 131-148.

Given the fact that in Song 1,9 the mare recalls the conceptual domain MILITARY CAVALRY, from the perspective of Cognitive Semantics it is important to investigate which specific aspect(s) of the domain in question is/are highlighted by the lexeme *horse*. Cantrell's archaeological and literary research on war horses and chariots in Israel provided evidence that mares were regularly used in battle throughout the Ancient Near East <sup>30</sup>. Her study illustrates that horses, both stallions and mares, were the most lethal weapons in battle, receiving special training to pull chariots (in the case of stallions), carry warriors, smite the opposing army and even to kill fallen soldiers by trampling them <sup>31</sup>. Biblical texts often mention the furious, appalling force of horses, acknowledged as exceptionally frightening and brave (e.g. Is 5,28; Ezek 26,10-11; Nahum 3,2-3; Hab 1,8; Job 39,20-25). Due to their irrepressible strength, horses were considered to be on the one hand difficult to tame (Ps 32,9; Prov 26,3), and on the other the most reliable arm in battle (Ps 20,7; 33,17; 76,6). In particular, Egyptian horses were regarded as particularly awe-inspiring and strong (e.g. Deut 17,16; 1 Kings 10,28; 2 Kings 18,23-24; Is 31,1). Cantrell convincingly showed that the mention of war horses, both in literature and in figurative arts, belonged to a widespread propaganda in the Ancient Near East that aimed to inspire feelings of awe, admiration, reverence, threat and submission <sup>32</sup>.

From a conceptual point of view, therefore, Song 1,9 should be read in light of a widespread imagery, both in Israel and in its *Umwelt*, in which horses were primarily associated with literary scenes and experiences of war and with concepts such as overwhelming, staggering, irresistible power. The next paragraph will illustrate how these concepts are activated in the metaphorization of the woman as a military mare.

## 2. Song 1,9 in Light of Cognitive Metaphor Theory

The main assumption of Cognitive Linguistics about metaphorical phenomena is that metaphor is first and foremost a matter of thought. According to Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory, *to metaphorize* is *to conceptualize* a reality A (labelled "Target") in terms of another reality B (labelled "Source") <sup>33</sup>. Metaphor in language is therefore the

<sup>30</sup> D. O'D. CANTRELL, *The Horsemen of Israel*. Horses and Chariotry in Monarchic Israel (History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant 1; Winona Lake, IN 2011).

<sup>31</sup> CANTRELL, *The Horsemen of Israel*, 136.

<sup>32</sup> CANTRELL, "Some Trust in Horses", 131-148.

<sup>33</sup> G. LAKOFF – M. JOHNSON, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago, IL 1980). For more recent developments of Cognitive Linguistics' research on metaphor, see R.W. GIBBS

product of cognitive processes by which the human mind understands and conceptualizes one aspect of reality with the help of the already accumulated knowledge of one or more domains of realities. Over the last three decades, many scholars have tried to improve Lakoff's pioneering work. Fauconnier and Turner are particularly worth mentioning since they created a paradigm called "Blending Theory" that broke new ground in metaphor studies <sup>34</sup>. According to the authors, the metaphorical process involves four mental spaces: (1) Generic space, (2) Source, (3) Target, and (4) Blended space. While the Generic Space is the well-known *tertium comparationis*, namely what the two domains have in common and what makes the mapping possible, and Source and Target are the same domains already evinced by Lakoff, the real aspect of novelty in the proposal of Fauconnier and Turner is the so called "Blended Space". This is a new structure in which the elements of Source and Target are blended, producing a whole which cannot be gathered from single domains. In other words, metaphor is not only the conceptualization of one domain in terms of another, as in Lakoff's proposal, but rather a brand-new concept that is more than the sum of the single blended concepts.

In light of the insights coming from both Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Blending Theory, and by drawing from the previous semantic/conceptual analysis, the metaphorization of the woman as military mare in Song 1,9 can be described as follows. The Song's woman shares some characteristics with a military mare (Generic space). Although the text as such does not provide clear hints, one may only speculate that there is something in the way the woman appears and behaves recalling the appearance and the demeanour of a horse. Since, as we illustrated in the previous paragraph, in Ancient Israel horses often had the connotation of magnificence, it seems sensible to hypothesize that the woman has some characteristics that evoke such a grandeur. It could be either some physical traits, such as a well-developed chest, a tall stature, a curvaceous body, or attitudes such as self-confidence, assertiveness and tenacity, or both <sup>35</sup>.

(ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought* (Cambridge – New York 2008); J.E. GRADY, "Metaphor", *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (eds. D. GEERAERTS – H. CUYCKENS) (Oxford 2007) 188-213.

<sup>34</sup> G. FAUCONNIER – M. TURNER, *The Way We Think. Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York 2002).

<sup>35</sup> Keel considered the identification of the so-called *tertium comparationis* crucial in order to interpret the Song's metaphors and argued that in the Song it refers to the dynamic dimension of metaphorizing and metaphorized. See O. KEEL, *Deine Blicke sind Tauben. Zur Metaphorik des Hohen Liedes* (SBS 114/115; Stuttgart 1984) 27-30. Nevertheless, according to Cognitive Linguistics, the *tertium comparationis* is by no means the core of metaphor.

The magnificent aspect that the metaphorizing and the metaphorized have in common activates the mapping between the two domains, namely the Source MILITARY MARE and the Target WOMAN, so that some of the conceptual elements of the former are projected into the latter. Since military horses were considered to be the most powerful, invincible weapons in Ancient Near Eastern warfare, the concept of awe-inspiring, unstoppable strength plays a major role here. Other concepts such as “lethal weapon”, “killer power”, etc. are suppressed simply because a love poem cannot allow the most truculent aspects of the Source domain MILITARY MARE to emerge. Cognitive Linguistics explain this phenomenon through the categories of “highlighting” and “hiding”, which clarify that the metaphorical mapping between domains is always partial and conditioned by the context <sup>36</sup>. As far as the Target domain is concerned, the cross-mapped conceptual element seems to be the woman’s body, as highlighted by the immediate context. Indeed, the mention of the woman’s cheeks, neck and jewels in Song 1,10 suggests that the man is admiring her alluring body. The man is not staring at, so to speak, “neutral” body parts. Cheeks, indeed, surround the mouth, which is an erogenous body part, and their seductive power is clearly emphasized in Song 5,13, in which the woman describes her beloved <sup>37</sup>. Also the neck arouses erotic thoughts, since it moves the gaze on the one hand towards the mouth, on the other towards the breasts. That is why, in the Song’s descriptions of the woman’s body, the so called *wasf*, the contemplation of her neck is always either preceded or followed by the mention of her mouth/lips and breasts (Song 4,4; 7,5). Cheeks and neck might be considered two synecdoches, namely parts indicating the entire sensuality of the woman’s body. The conceptual elements “unstoppable strength” of the Source and “physical beauty” of the Target are blended in the metaphor, so that the resulting metaphorical expression conveys the turbulent, boisterous effect of the woman’s beauty on the beloved, the emotional crash that she produces in him. Her beauty and sensuality are overwhelming and irresistible, so that if their love was a battle field, she would definitely be the victor.

Interestingly enough, the man addresses his beloved with the vocative *my friend*, which creates a strong contrast with the initial *horse*. The two terms, *horse* and *my friend* respectively open and close the line, with a probably intentional assonance created by the final *hireq* (רעית/לססתי). While on the one hand the expression *to a mare that is among Pharaoh’s*

<sup>36</sup> Z. KÖVECSES, *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction* (Oxford 2010) 103.

<sup>37</sup> Another possible, albeit debated, reference to the woman’s cheeks, with a similar seductive connotation, can be found in Song 4,3. See BARBIERO, *Cantico*, 163.



*chariots* recalls a military, enemy scenario, the vocative *my friend* cancels the conceptual aspect of hostility. In other words, the man does not feel threatened or scared by such a majestic woman. On the contrary, he is fascinated to such an extent that in Song 1,11 he even wants to emphasize her beauty, by making new jewellery for her.

To sum up, by drawing from the conceptual domain MILITARY MARE, the Song conceptualizes the domain WOMAN in terms of staggering power. The view according to which Song 1,9 “expresses an androcentric and an anthropocentric worldview, showing men as the hegemony, as those who have dominion over women and animals for their own benefit”<sup>38</sup>, seems to reflect more contemporary concerns on gender than Ancient Near Eastern imagery, in which horses were primarily associated with the concept of power. A horse/mare can be certainly tamed and controlled, yet these are aspects that are not foregrounded either in the Hebrew Bible or in the Ancient Near East (see above, II.1). In light of the immediate context (Song 1,9-11), the aspect of the woman that represents the specific target of the metaphorical process is her alluring beauty that results in an uncontrollable, tumultuous, even chaotic power. At the same time, by calling her *my friend*, the man is far from retreating. On the contrary, he seems, so to speak, to welcome and enjoy such a magnificent woman: she is irresistible, and he loves it.

### III. PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS: THINKING “OUTSIDE THE BOX”

As Steen argued, metaphor is not only an instrument of knowledge, but it also functions as a means for communication, “making people think outside the box of the target domain and review that from another box inside some source domain”<sup>39</sup>. A pragmatic/communicative approach to Song 1,9 requires a broad investigation in order to recover whether and to what extent its military metaphor is unique and challenges the addressees to think about the woman “outside the conceptual box(es)” in which she is usually confined. This paragraph will show that Song 1,9 presents a novel metaphor with respect to the rest of the poem (1), the Hebrew Bible (2) and cognate literature (3).

<sup>38</sup> THÖNE, “Female Humanimality”, 397.

<sup>39</sup> J. GAVINS, “Metaphor Studies in Retrospect and Prospect. An Interview with Gerard Steen”, *Review of Cognitive Linguistics* 12 (2014) 493-510, here 497.

### 1. *Song 1,9 within the Poem*

The metaphor of the mare among Pharaoh's chariots is at the same time unique and in line with the rest of the poem.

On the one hand, the metaphor as such never occurs again in the lyric. While other images of animals are repeatedly found in the Song, the only reference to the woman as a mare is in Song 1,9. This observation already demonstrates the peculiarity of the verse. Although close analysis of the poem's individual metaphors would certainly bring many more meanings to light <sup>40</sup>, it could be said that, generally speaking, the Song's imagery conveys a portrayal of an ideal, dreamlike, pacified love and a conceptualization of the woman (and of the man as well) as sweet, tender, full of joy and life. Song 1,9, surprisingly, takes a different conceptual direction, emphasizing the disconcerting power of the woman's beauty, building up a much more complex character and a much less irenic dynamic of love.

On the other hand, however, the metaphor of the mare is conceptually close to a cluster of images underlying the chaotic, tumultuous aspect of the woman's beauty and sensuality. For instance, the image of goats gambolling down from the mountains, might serve to conceptualize the woman as "unbiddable and 'wild'" (4,1) <sup>41</sup>, and the mention of lions and leopards, presented as part of her environment (4,8), suggests that she also has something "savage". Such a wild aspect also emerges from Song 1,5 in which the woman compares herself to the tents of Kedar and the curtains of Solomon. While Song 1,5 seems to be, first of all, an apology about her dark skin to the daughters of Jerusalem (*I am black and/but beautiful*), at the same time it presents the woman's beauty as both wild (the mention of Bedouins) and luxurious (the mention of Solomon's curtains), creating a kind of "short circuit" in the final, astonishing portrayal: her beauty is both very rustic and very sophisticated!

Furthermore, by drawing from the conceptual domain WAR, Song 1,9 is in line with a cluster of military metaphors that one can find throughout the entire poem. As argued by several Cognitive Linguistics' scholars: "[w]hat one sometimes finds at the surface level of a literary text are specific micrometaphors, but underlying these metaphors is a megametaphor

<sup>40</sup> For more details on the Song's metaphors, see J.-P. SONNET, "Le Cantique: la fabrique poétique", *Les nouvelles voies de l'exégèse*. En lisant le Cantique des cantiques. XIX<sup>e</sup> congrès de l'Association catholique pour l'étude de la Bible. Toulouse, Septembre 2002 (eds. J. NIEUVIARTS – P. DEBERGÉ) (LD 190; Paris 2002) 159-184; MUNRO, *Spike-nard and Saffron*; KEEL, *Deine Blicke*; H.-P. MÜLLER, *Vergleich und Metapher im Hohelied* (OBO 56; Freiburg 1984); R. ALTER, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York 1985) 185-203.

<sup>41</sup> G. BARBIERO, *Song of Songs*. A Close Reading (VTS 144; Leiden 2011) 178.

that makes these surface micrometaphors coherent”<sup>42</sup>. We will here employ new labels, respectively “underlying conceptual metaphor” (instead of “megametaphor”) and “surface images” (instead of “micrometaphor”), since the “micrometaphors” at stake are very complex and not at all “micro”. The underlying conceptual metaphor LOVE IS WAR is a ubiquitous conceptualization of love in the Song, running through the entire poem and surfacing in four clusters of surface images, i.e. the belligerent man, the fortified citadel, the belligerent love, and the belligerent woman. The first surface image, i.e. the belligerent man, occurs in Song 2,4 in which the woman portrays her lover as conqueror who takes possession of a citadel with his army/banner<sup>43</sup>. Song 5,10 describes the man as a deployed soldier, standing out among myriads. The same surface metaphor is perhaps contained in the controversial Song 6,12: “Before I was aware, my desire transformed me into war chariots of my noble people”<sup>44</sup>. Song 6,12 is particularly interesting, because it very closely recalls Song 1,9 with the mention of military chariots. This can be seen as an example of what Elliott calls “mirroring dynamic”: in their respective descriptions of their beloved, both the man and the woman use very similar attributes and terms<sup>45</sup>. The second surface image, i.e. the fortified citadel, which was already implicit in Song 2,4, explicitly occurs in Song 4,4 portraying the woman’s neck as a tower on which a thousand bucklers and shields of warriors hang. In Song 6,4, after the mention of the cities of Jerusalem and Tirzah, she is described as “frightening as an army with banners”. The image occurs again in Song 7,5 and, finally, in Song 8,10, which seems to allude to the surrender of a citadel under siege. The third surface image, i.e. the belligerent love, occurs twice. First, in Song 3,6-8 which describes the royal procession of Solomon’s litter escorted by warriors/mighty men “all equipped with swords and expert in war”. Second, in Song 8,6 which portrays the tireless battle between Love and Death. Finally, the fourth surface metaphor, i.e. the belligerent woman, which emerges in Song 1,9, overlaps with the image of the fortified citadel in the aforementioned text of Song 6,4, and is also found in 7,1-6. While Song 7,1 seems to refer to a military dance celebrating the heroine and Song 7,5 portrays the woman

<sup>42</sup> KÖVECSÉS, *Metaphor*, 57.

<sup>43</sup> The meaning of the root דגל, “army/banner”, occurring in Song 2,4; 5,10; 6,4.10, is widely debated. We read the root דגל as “army”, retaining the meaning of “banner” as a metonymy. For the discussion, see D. VERDE, “War-Games in the Song of Songs. A Reading of Song 2,4 in Light of Cognitive Linguistics”, *SJOT* 30 (2016) 185-197.

<sup>44</sup> For the discussion on this very problematic line, see BARBIERO, *Cantico*, 297-302.

<sup>45</sup> M.T. ELLIOTT, *The Literary Unity of the Canticle* (European University Studies. Series 23 – Theology 371; Frankfurt am Main 1989) 246-251.

as “fortified”, Song 7,6 presents her as a majestic conqueror who imprisons the king, with (again) an overlap of the domains WAR and ROYALTY.

Song 1,9, therefore, conceptually belongs to a cluster of military images that cover the entire poem. Such warlike images surface in the text making the underlying metaphor LOVE IS WAR emerge as one of the Song’s central (and overlooked) themes. The Song’s military metaphors conceptualize the love relationship as, so to speak, a “war-game” and a “dangerous matter”, in which both lovers run the risk of conquering and being conquered. Moreover, they conceptualize the love relationship of the Song’s character as something dynamic and unpredictable: if she is like a fortified citadel, and he is like a warrior who must fight to conquer her, this means that she is not totally at his mercy and that love is an adventure that is by no means immediate or absolutely guaranteed once and for all. If she is also described as belligerent, this means that in love as in war, *who conquers whom* is absolutely not obvious. In particular, the surface image “the belligerent woman”, seems to be employed in order to conceptualize the woman not only as yearned for, due to her beauty and attractiveness, but also as full of desire and impetuous passion for her beloved. If she is not only “conquered” but also “conqueror”, this means that the passion of both lovers is equally powerful and able to seduce and, so to speak, to knock the partner out.

To sum up, while the metaphor of the mare is unique within the poem and functions as a disturbing element of the poem’s peaceful and suave atmospheres, on the other it is in line with a group of metaphors that present the woman as wild and fierce (Song 1,5; 4,1.8). In line with other military metaphors, the communicative goal of Song 1,9 is to emphasize her role within the love experience of the poem’s character: far from merely being the object of desire, she has also an enormous seductive power which the man can barely resist.

## 2. *Song 1,9 within the Hebrew Bible*

The uniqueness and novelty of Song 1,9 stand out even more when the line is read within the broader literary context of the Hebrew Bible. The metaphorization of a woman as a mare is unique to Song 1,9 not only in the context of the poem, as shown above, but also in the context of the entire Hebrew Bible, and not only as far as the metaphorical, linguistic expression is concerned, but also with regard to the resulting conceptualization of the woman’s beauty and sensuality.

Although the numerous women of the Hebrew Bible are never characterized in terms similar to Song 1,9, vaguely similar images are found

in the Prophets' description of the relationship between YHWH and Israel. Jer 2,23-24 describes Israel chasing the Baals as a young camel and a wild ass in heat. The metaphors of wild animals of Jer 2,23-24 are particularly interesting because they combine, on the one hand, the sexual and animal imageries and, on the other hand, the metaphORIZATION of Israel as YHWH's young fiancée, introduced at the very beginning of the pericope (Jer 2,2). On another occasion, Jeremiah represents Israel through the metaphor of sex-crazed horses (Jer 5,8). By referring to the sons of Israel (Jer 5,7), at the same time the prophet implicitly addresses his people as a wife, who gave YHWH rebellious children. Furthermore, the characterization of the stallions as *מִזֻּנִּים מִשָּׁכִים* (Jer 5,8) introduces a warlike element. While the qere *מִזֻּנִּים* is a hophal participle of *זָן*, "to feed" – hence the translation "well-fed horses" (NRSV) – the ketib *מִשָּׁכִים* is a pual participle of *זָן*, "equipped, supplied". The term *מִשָּׁכִים* is usually understood as a hiphil participle of *שָׁכָה* "to be mad, lustful", yet it can also be read as the plural of *מִשְׁכָּח/מִשְׁכָּחִי*, "Meshech", which refers to an Anatolian people who were very well-known as producers of war-horses, as Assyrian documents testify<sup>46</sup>. The horses are therefore qualified as (*military*) *equipped horses of Meshech* (Jer 7,7), *each neighing for his neighbour's wife* (Jer 5,8). Once again, the sexual, animal, war and female domains overlap. Something similar happens in the book of Ezekiel, in which Oholah (*alias* the sanctuaries of the North?) and Oholibah (*alias* the Jerusalem Temple?)<sup>47</sup> are portrayed as unfaithful women, who lusted after their lovers, namely Assyrian and Babylonian warriors and horsemen (Ezek 23,5-8), after which the prophet describes a sexual scene between the Egyptians and Oholibah. The former are described as donkeys and stallions, and the latter is perhaps implicitly portrayed as a mare (Ezek 23,20). This group of texts suggests that, in the conceptual system of the Hebrew Bible, domains such as WOMAN, WILD/INDOMITABLE ANIMALS, SEX, and WAR are occasionally tied together and blended, so that Song 1,9 is not to be regarded as standing in a conceptual vacuum.

Nevertheless, the differences between Song 1,9 and the aforementioned prophetic texts by far exceed their similarities. The first, most evident difference concerns the Target: while prophetic texts speak in female, animal, and belligerent terms about Israel, Song 1,9 describes a woman. More importantly, whereas the prophets employ the domains WOMAN, WILD/

<sup>46</sup> W.L. HOLLADAY, *Jeremiah. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*. Vol. 1. Chapters 1-25 (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1986) 181.

<sup>47</sup> On the controversial interpretation of Oholah and Oholibah, see W. ZIMMERLI, *Ezekiel. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*. Vol. 1. Chapters 1-24 (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1979).

INDOMITABLE ANIMALS, SEX, and WAR in order to describe Israel's unfaithfulness, suggesting an underlying negative conceptualization of female sexual desire as lustful and unreliable, Song 1,9 conceptualizes the woman's sensuality in laudatory, enthusiastic terms.

As a result, the metaphor of the military mare in Song 1,9 emerges as highly exceptional in the Hebrew Bible, not only with respect to its linguistic expression, which is, as such, unique, but also on the conceptual level. By introducing a new metaphor and a new conceptualization of the woman, not only does it enrich the figurative language of the Hebrew Bible, but it also introduces positive and challenging ideas about the woman's beauty and Eros.

### 3. *Song 1,9 and Cognate Literature*

Although the representation of a woman as mare occurs neither in the rest of the Song nor in the Hebrew Bible, it is found in the poem's cognate literature.

The portrayal of the woman in Song 1,9 might recall the image of some armed goddesses whose presence is very well attested in the Ancient Near East<sup>48</sup>. For example, in ancient Canaanite mythological texts, known from Ugarit, the goddess Anat is described as a tremendous, bloodthirsty female warrior. She is also present in Egyptian literature and iconographic representations<sup>49</sup>. Such a scary, cruel warrior had incredible power, prestige and independence within the Ugaritic pantheon<sup>50</sup>. Whereas Anat would be expected to be subdued to a male divinity, due to the androcentric mythological system of the Ancient Near East, in the Baal Cycle she is portrayed as a "virgin warrior" fighting against and defeating male gods such as Yam-Nahar (KTU 1.1-2), Mot (KTU 1.5-6), and even El (KTU 1.3-4). As West and Cornelius demonstrated, Anat and other armed goddesses were often portrayed on horseback, which made their belligerent aspect even more menacing<sup>51</sup>. All these texts show that in Ancient Near Eastern

<sup>48</sup> I. CORNELIUS, *The Many Faces of the Goddess*. The Iconography of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qadesheth, and Asherah c.1500-1000 BCE (OBO 204; Fribourg 2008<sup>2</sup>) 1-4.

<sup>49</sup> A.S. KAPELRUD, *The Violent Goddess*. Anat in the Ras Shamra Texts (Scandinavian University Books; Oslo 1969); N.H. WALLS, *The Goddess Anat in Ugaritic Myth* (SBLDS 135; Atlanta, GA 1992).

<sup>50</sup> WALLS, *The Goddess Anat*, 77-112.

<sup>51</sup> D.R. WEST, *Some Cults of Greek Goddesses and Female Daemons of Oriental Origin*. Especially in Relation to the Mythology of Goddesses and Daemons in the Semitic World (AOAT 233; Kevelaer 1995) 116-123; CORNELIUS, *The Many Faces of the Goddess*, 40-44.

imagery the combination of domains such as LOVE (Anat was also the goddess of love and fertility <sup>52</sup>), WAR, HORSES and WOMAN was not uncommon. In this regard, Song 1,9 and its representation of the woman as a military mare fits in the broad conceptual universe of its *Umwelt*. Nevertheless, all these texts are myths about gods and goddesses, and they never employ the aforementioned domains in order to describe the love relationship of (human) man and woman and their games of seduction. With respect to this group of texts, therefore, Song 1,9 is to be considered more different than similar.

Among ancient poems on human love, Egyptian literature seems to provide the closest parallel to the Song. Here one can find several references to horses within the context of human love. The image of cavalry, however, is mostly used to describe the man's desire rather than the woman's. For example, in *P. Harris 500* the girl incites her beloved to reach her as soon as possible by using the metaphor of a military horse in battle <sup>53</sup>. A similar image is found in the *Three Wishes*, in which the image of horses and chariots involves concepts such as velocity and restlessness, applied to the man <sup>54</sup>. The fragment *DM 1078* is also worth mentioning, since it is the only case in which the domain HORSE is perhaps used with reference to a woman: "(I) will take/my horse/before the wind/in her love" <sup>55</sup>. As Fox underscores, however, it is actually unclear whether this line refers to the man's "hurry", as in the previous texts, or whether the expression "my horse" metaphorically refers to the man's beloved <sup>56</sup>. Even in the latter reading, the text would still provide a very different conceptualization of the woman from the one contained in Song 1,9. The Egyptian line, indeed, describes the man's sexual desire in terms of a stallion that wants to mount a mare and, therefore, represents the woman as yearned for, passive, and an object of desire. Song 1,9, on the contrary, portrays this the other way around, since here it is the woman that seems about "to dash" towards her beloved. Song 1,9 and the Egyptian fragment *DM 1078* therefore convey very different ideas.

Whereas metaphorizing a woman as mare/horse is uncommon in the Ancient Near East, Greek literature makes ample use of this motif. While in a group of texts such a motif has laudatory purposes with respect to female beauty, elegance and freedom (Alcman, Phocylides, Euripides,

<sup>52</sup> J.C. DE MOOR, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Nisaba – Religious Texts Translation Series 16; Leiden 1987) 198.

<sup>53</sup> FOX, *The Song*, 8.

<sup>54</sup> FOX, *The Song*, 66.

<sup>55</sup> FOX, *The Song*, 79.

<sup>56</sup> FOX, *The Song*, 79.



Theocritus)<sup>57</sup>, in another group of texts it conveys negative, sarcastic, judgmental ideas on woman's unreliable, stubborn behaviour and lascivious sexuality (Simonides, Theognis, Anacreon, Eubulus, Hesychius)<sup>58</sup>. In the "Alphabetical Collection of All Words" by Hesychius the word *πῶλος*, *filly*, is even labelled as "prostitute"<sup>59</sup>. As a result, while in Greek literature the image of the woman-horse very often conveys the stereotypical, misogynistic idea of "woman's beauty and sexuality are lascivious and unreliable", in Song 1,9 the image conveys the idea of woman's sexuality as active and even dominant within the context of the lovers' games of seduction, without any hint of judgment.

To conclude, Song 1,9 is a significant example of metaphor that is to be regarded as both in line with the Song's milieu and the creative result of the author's poetic genius. Despite some undeniable connections with the conceptual universe of the poem's *Umwelt* and with similar images in surrounding literature, Song 1,9 presents aesthetic and conceptual aspects of novelty, enriching not only the figurative language but also the concept of woman in Israel's milieu.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Guided by Cognitive Linguistics' studies, this paper has tried to apply a multi-level approach to Song 1,9, analysing syntactic, conceptual and pragmatic features of the metaphor of the woman as a mare. We have shown that the syntax of Song 1,9 presents a case of marked word order

<sup>57</sup> See the fragment *P. Louvre E 3320* attributed to Alcman, in D.A. CAMPBELL (ed.), *Greek Lyric*. Vol. 2. Anacreon, Anacreontea Choral Lyric from Olympus to Alcman (LOEB 143; Cambridge, MA 1988) 360-369; PHOCYLIDES, *Sentences* (ed. P. DERRON) (CUFr; Paris 1986) vv. 201-204; EURIPIDES, "Hippolytus", *Euripidis Fabulae*. Vol. 1. Cyclops, Alcestis, Medea, Heraclidae, Hippolytus, Andromacha, Hecuba (ed. J. DIGGLE) (SCBO; Oxonii 1984) v. 546; ID., "Bacchae", *Euripidis Fabulae*. Vol. 3. Helena, Phoenixisae, Orestes, Bacchae, Iphigenia Aulidensis, Rhesus (ed. J. DIGGLE) (SCBO; Oxonii 1994) v. 1056.

<sup>58</sup> See the fragment 7 attributed to Simonides, in M.L. WEST (ed.), *Iambi et elegi graeci ante Alexandrum cantati*. Vol. 2. Callinus, Mimnermus, Semonides, Solon, Tyrtaeus, Minora Adespota (Oxonii 1992) 99-104; some verses (257-260) attributed to Theognis, in M.L. WEST (ed.), *Iambi et elegi graeci ante Alexandrum cantati*. Vol. 1. Archilochus, Hipponax, Theognidea (Oxford 1989) 186-187; the fragments 346-347 attributed to Anacreon and the fragment 417, in which Heraclitus testifies that Anacreon "used the 'allegory' of a horse to describe her [the woman's] frisky disposition", in CAMPBELL (ed.), *Greek Lyric*, 40-42 and 95; the fragment 84 attributed to Eubulus, in R.L. HUNTER (ed.), *Eubulus Comicus*. The Fragments (Cambridge 1983) 63.

<sup>59</sup> P.A. HANSEN – K. LATTE (eds.), *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*. Vol. 3. Π-Σ (Sammlung griechischer und lateinischer Grammatiker 11/3; Berlin 2005) 4500.

that underlies the importance of the metaphor in question (I). We argued that Song 1,9 requires a martial interpretation, and that scholars' opposition of military and royal imagery is conceptually inappropriate within the context of the Ancient Near East. Furthermore, we illustrated that the conceptual relations between the domains MILITARY MARE and WOMAN suggest that Song 1,9 portrays the woman's beauty and sensuality first and foremost as powerful and irresistible, rather than "under male domination" as some scholars suggested (II). In this regard, Song 1,9 presents a novel, challenging metaphor and conceptualization of the woman with respect to the Song, the Hebrew Bible and cognate literature (III).

KU Leuven – Faculteit Theologie      Danilo VERDE – Pierre VAN HECKE  
Sint-Michielsstraat, 4  
B – 3000 Leuven

#### SUMMARY

Although the military meaning of Song 1,9 is heatedly debated, a cognitive linguistic analysis supports a martial interpretation. Such a warlike image, underscored by its marked word order (syntactic level), presents the Song's woman as powerful and irresistible (conceptual level). Furthermore, while the representation of the woman in military terms is in line with both the rest of the poem and the broad conceptual universe of its *Umwelt*, Song 1,9 presents aesthetic and conceptual aspects of novelty, enriching not only the figurative language but also the concept of woman in Ancient Israel's milieu (pragmatic level).

## DO *NOMINA SACRA* INFLUENCE THE TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION OF 2 ESDRAS 12,12?

The text critic aims to reconstruct two things: an original text (or texts), and the transmission of that text through time. These two tasks are inter-related. Internal evidence sometimes provides explanations for how a text develops in transmission. Similarly, reconstruction of the transmission of a text through time based on external evidence can provide reasons to support or question reconstructions of the earliest readings. Sometimes, external evidence can be seemingly opposed to internal evidence, when there is overwhelming manuscript (MS) support for a reading that makes less sense in context than an alternative. In cases such as these, the opposition can sometimes be resolved if a plausible factor in the transmission of the text can be found to explain why a particular reading might find its way into the majority of manuscripts (MSS). This article raises one such text critical situation, and uses it as an opportunity to examine a factor in the textual transmission of some proper nouns that I do not believe has been previously discussed in print.

At 2 Esd 12,12 (Neh 2,12) the main text of Hanhart's critical edition of 2 Esdras in the Göttingen series has Ἰσραήλ for the Greek word equivalent to לִירוּשָׁלַם in the Hebrew/Aramaic text <sup>1</sup>. Hanhart's reading has the support of all MSS that witness to the Old Greek tradition.

This situation is interpreted in the apparatus of BHQ as a substitution by the translator <sup>2</sup>. It could also be interpreted as either evidence of a Hebrew/Aramaic *Vorlage* that is variant from the Tiberian tradition, or as a misreading by the translator of לִירוּשָׁלַם as לִישְׂרָאֵל\*. Here is the noun in context in the Tiberian Hebrew, Hanhart's text and Wooden's translation in NETS <sup>3</sup>:

וְלֹא־הִגַּדְתִּי לְאָדָם מִה אֱלֹהֵי נָתַן אֵלַי לַעֲשׂוֹת לִירוּשָׁלַם  
καὶ οὐκ ἀπήγγειλα ἀνθρώπῳ τί ὁ θεός διδωσιν εἰς καρδίαν μου τοῦ  
ποιῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ  
and I told no one what God was putting into my heart to do along with Israel

<sup>1</sup> R. HANHART (ed.), *Esdrae liber II* (Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum VIII, 2; Göttingen 1993).

<sup>2</sup> D. MARCUS, *Ezra and Nehemiah* (Biblia Hebraica Quinta 20; Stuttgart 2006) 45.

<sup>3</sup> R.G. WOODEN, "2 Esdras", *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title* (eds. A. PIETERSMA – B.G. WRIGHT) (Oxford 2007) 405-423, here 414.

Given Wooden's exegetical interpretation of μετὰ + gen. as 'along with', either Ἰσραήλ or Ἱερουσαλήμ can make sense here: Nehemiah could be acting 'along with [the people of] Israel', or 'along with [the inhabitants of] Jerusalem'. Both nouns also make sense in the wider context. For example, in v. 17 Nehemiah exhorts 'us' to act to rebuild 'Jerusalem' — where 'us' could mean 'the people of Israel' or 'the inhabitants of Jerusalem'. Though the text as it stands may perhaps be slightly more straightforward, as not all those acting with Nehemiah to rebuild the city were inhabitants of Jerusalem. For an historic example of the interchangeability of these nouns, when correcting their text toward a Hebrew *Vorlage* the Complutensian editors were able to replace one noun for the other without feeling the need to change the preposition: μετὰ τῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ.

One problem with this exegetical interpretation is that the preposition μετὰ + gen. in the sense of 'along with' translates the Hebrew preposition ל. The only other place in 2 Esdras where μετά is equivalent to ל is 2 Esd 23,6 (Neh 13,6) <sup>4</sup>:

ולקץ ימים

καὶ μετὰ τὸ τέλος τῶν ἡμερῶν

And after the end of the days

Here, the preposition μετὰ + acc. forms a temporal expression 'after the end of the days' that translates the Hebrew temporal expression 'up to an end of days'. The use of ל as such a temporal terminative is not unusual <sup>5</sup>. However, in contrast, reading ל in the sense of 'along with' in 2 Esd 12,12 is not a typical reading of this preposition. Given that the translator of 2 Esdras was usually strictly literal in his rendering of the Hebrew, this seems out of character unless one supposes that the translator worked from a *Vorlage* with not merely a different noun, but also a different preposition, such as בִּישְׂרָאֵל\*.

Another interpretive option exists where the Greek preposition more comfortably aligns with its Hebrew equivalent. LSJ gives a later meaning of μετά as 'in one's dealings with' <sup>6</sup>. An example of this usage is in Acts 14,27 (quoting NA28 and the NRSV):

ὅσα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς μετ' αὐτῶν

that God had done with them

<sup>4</sup> Translation Wooden's.

<sup>5</sup> R.J. WILLIAMS, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax* (Toronto 2007) 105, §266b.

<sup>6</sup> H.G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT – H.S. JONES, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1996) μετά s.v. A III 1; F. MONTANARI, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (Leiden 2015) μετά s.v. II A E.

If the μετὰ τοῦ [noun] in 2 Esd 12,12 is interpreted in this way, then the Greek preposition corresponds to a reading of the Hebrew preposition as a ‘־ of specification’<sup>7</sup>. In this case, the noun that best fits this exegetical interpretation is Ἱερουσαλήμ because in Neh 2,9-20 Nehemiah is relating what he is doing and will do in regards to the city itself, not to the people of Israel.

Therefore, while both Ἰσραήλ and Ἱερουσαλήμ can make sense in context, the text ποιῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ Ἱερουσαλήμ in the sense of ‘to do in dealing with Jerusalem’ would be closer to both the Tiberian noun and preposition than the Göttingen text and NETS interpretation ποιῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ ‘to do along with Israel’. If this is the case, then why do the overwhelming majority of Greek MSS attest Ἰσραήλ? Evidence is presented here that the reading Ἰσραήλ may be the result of internal textual transmission of the Greek text influenced by the early use of *nomina sacra*.

Discounting the Complutensis, Hanhart collates the readings of 37 Greek witnesses to the text of 2 Esdras in the apparatus of his edition. These readings provide the dataset for the following discussion. Most MSS in the collation witness to the text of the Old Greek of 2 Esdras<sup>8</sup>: A B S V 44 46 52 55 58 64 68 71 74 98 106 107 119 120 121 122 125 130 134 236 243 248 314 370 379 381 610 728 731 762; and three MSS witness to the Antiochene text of 2 Esdras: 19 93 108<sup>9</sup>.

The consonantal text יררשׁלם is attested 86 times in the Tiberian text(s) of Ezra and Nehemiah. It is almost always equivalent to Ἱερουσαλήμ in the Old Greek MSS, and in Hanhart’s main text. Aside from *nomina sacra*, the exceptions are our text and also 2 Esd 21,22 (Neh 11,22), which is missing from the Old Greek.

The use of the *nomen sacrum* ἱλῆμ for Ἱερουσαλήμ has potential to influence the transmission of the Greek text because across the MS tradition of 2 Esdras, ἱλῆμ apparently undergoes more development in textual transmission than Ἱερουσαλήμ. In the dataset being considered, Ἱερουσαλήμ is written 2960 times with only one variation due to haplography, ἱρουσαλημ, attested twice in MS 108 at 2 Esd 9,9 and 2 Esd 22,29. In

<sup>7</sup> WILLIAMS, *Williams’ Hebrew Syntax*, 108, §273a.

<sup>8</sup> The occasional exceptions to this statement, S 121 728, attest no readings of relevance to our dataset.

<sup>9</sup> In the following discussion, all MSS are referred to by Rahlfs number according to the conventions in Hanhart’s critical edition. For the reader, unfamiliar with the text-critical apparatus of the Göttingen series, note that when MS are joined by a dash this indicates a relationship of textual affinity, not a range of MSS. Two changes have been made to Hanhart’s conventional notation to aid the reader: i. When a referenced MS is believed to have used a MS listed immediately previously as its exemplar, the MS sign is placed square brackets; ii. All variants are written in full and not abbreviated.

contrast, the *nomen sacrum* is attested 24 times, but in only 11 of these cases is it spelled  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\eta}\bar{\mu}$ : 71 (2 Esd 6,5), 106 381 (2 Esd 7,10), 44 (2 Esd 7,17), 98 (2 Esd 10,9), 19-93-108 (2 Esd 12,12), 19-93 (2 Esd 18,1), Scpamph (2 Esd 21,22). In two places the *nomen sacrum* has undergone metathesis,  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\eta}\bar{\mu} > \bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\mu}$ : Scpamph (2 Esd 10,7) S (2 Esd 22,29). This form occurs elsewhere in S, and is one of several *nomina sacra* attested in this MS for  $\Upsilon\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\mu$ <sup>10</sup>. The other 11 cases attest  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}$ , one of two *nomina sacra* for  $\Upsilon\sigma\rho\alpha\acute{\eta}\lambda$ <sup>11</sup>: 236 (2 Esd 5,16), 19-108 44 (2 Esd 10,7), 121 (2 Esd 12,17<sup>1</sup>), 120 (2 Esd 12:17<sup>2</sup>), 125 (2 Esd 12,20), 55 (2 Esd 14,22), 46-[52] (2 Es 22,29), 74 (2 Esd 22,43). In all these 11 places the equivalent Tiberian text has  $\text{ירושלם}$  and, aside from occasional minuses, the rest of the Greek MSS attest  $\Upsilon\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\mu$ . This situation could only come about if  $\Upsilon\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\mu$  somehow came to be replaced by  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}$  on multiple independent occasions. It may be possible that these three forms are sequential developments in textual transmission:  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\eta}\bar{\mu} > \bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\mu} > \bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}$ . Such developments, via  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\eta}\bar{\mu}$  and/or  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\mu}$ , leading to the eventual situation where  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\eta}\bar{\lambda}$  has been substituted for  $\Upsilon\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\mu$ , can be explained on both phonemic and graphical grounds, some of which we now consider.

According to some theories of manual copying processes, a written word is always realised phonemically — that is the individual units of sound that carry meaning are perceived by a copyist. This can be either audibly by a reader in a scriptorium, or internally by the inner voice of the copyist reading the exemplar<sup>12</sup>. Whatever the phonetic realisation such units of sound have when produced by a Greek speaker at a given place or period, there are only a small number of different ways to phonemically realise  $\Upsilon\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\mu$ , such as for e.g., /ierusalēm/ where  $\iota$  is vocalic or /jerusalēm/ where  $\iota$  is consonantal. In contrast,  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\eta}\bar{\mu}$  could be realised phonemically as the word /ierusalēm/, as an initialism (the letters are spelled out) /i-l-ē-m/, or as an acronym /ilēm/. Each of these possibilities also has multiple alternatives. For example, aside from the possible realisation of  $\iota$  as vocalic or consonantal, when realised as an initialism the letters can be pronounced by phonemic value /i-l-ē-m/, by name /iota-lambda-ēta-mu/, or by a mixture of the two /i-la-ē-mu/. The variety of ways that  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\eta}\bar{\mu}$  can be realised phonemically means that from a phonemic perspective there are more possibilities for the *nomen sacrum* to develop in transmission than for the written word  $\Upsilon\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\mu$ .

<sup>10</sup> D. JONGKIND, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus* (Texts and Studies 5; Piscataway, NJ 2013) 66.

<sup>11</sup> The other being  $\bar{\iota}\bar{\sigma}\bar{\lambda}$ , e.g. S at 2 Esd 23,3.

<sup>12</sup> A. DAIN, *Les Manuscrits* (Paris 1964) 44-46.

Not all theorists of text criticism would agree that a written word is always realised phonemically. However, even from merely a graphical perspective, the *nomina sacra* for Ἰσραήλ and Ἱερουσαλήμ are more easily confused with one another than the words themselves. The word Ἱερουσαλήμ is significantly longer than Ἰσραήλ, and they differ in a number of ways, Ἱερουσαλήμ contains ε and ου for example. In contrast, ἱῆλ differs from ἱλῆμ and ἱῆλμ by only a single grapheme, which represents a final nasal. If phonemic realisation is a factor in transmission (and it presumably was at least some points in the history of transmission), then differing only in a final nasal is significant, as these are some of the most liable sound features to be dropped in speech<sup>13</sup>.

So from both a phonemic and graphical standpoint, it can be argued that the *nomina sacra* for Ἰσραήλ and Ἱερουσαλήμ are more liable to be confused for one another than the words themselves. Yet whatever theoretical explanation is proposed for this phenomenon, the important fact is that on the 24 occasions in our data where a *nomen sacrum* is used for Ἱερουσαλήμ, we find ἱῆλ 11 times in contrast to ἱλῆμ also 11 times. Yet there is otherwise no interchange of the fully spelled words Ἱερουσαλήμ and Ἰσραήλ. These data provide good grounds for believing that Ἱερουσαλήμ can develop to Ἰσραήλ in the transmission of the Greek text due to the substitution of the *nomina sacra* for these words, ἱλῆμ > ἱῆλ.

Therefore, it is possible that the reading Ἰσραήλ, attested in all Old Greek MSS at 2 Esd 12,12 could have arisen from ἱλῆμ > ἱῆλ in an early witness to 2 Esdras. The above data provide evidence that this *nomen sacrum* can be erroneously written where the original word is Ἱερουσαλήμ. The Antiochene tradition may preserve an early variant of the Old Greek tradition with ἱλῆμ. The Antiochene MSS 19, 93, and 108 attest the doublet την (τη 93) ἱλῆμ και μετὰ τον (τοῦ 93) ἱῆλ. One way this situation could have come about is if a revisor consulted a Hebrew/Aramaic *Vorlage* that agreed with the Tiberian text, but was not confident to remove ἱῆλ. However, the Antiochene text is not shy of replacing elements of the inherited Old Greek text elsewhere, and if a *Vorlage* was consulted one might expect Ἱερουσαλήμ to be written rather than the *nomen sacrum*. A more likely scenario is that a revisor possessed more than one Greek

<sup>13</sup> In the case of final ν, this is well documented, e.g. G. HORROCKS, *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers* (Chichester 2014) 274-277. However, given that final -μ is uncharacteristic of native Greek words, there is less discussion in the secondary literature of the potential of μ to be lost in this position. Some examples of loss or change of final -μ from the text history of 2 Esdras: רחום (Ezr 4,8) ρεουμ A > ραουλ B (2 Esd 4,8); שׁלום (Ezr 10,24) σολλημ A > σολμην majority of MSS (2 Esd 10,24); נפישׁים (Neh 7,52) νεφωσσειμ S > νεφωσσαι B (2 Esd 17,52).



exemplar from the Old Greek tradition with alternative variants ἱλῆμ/ἱῆλ, and being unable to choose between them preserved both in the Antiochene text. If such diversity arose by inadvertent change in transmission, the possibility discussed at length above, then presumably the gender of the preceding article was later harmonised to the *nomen sacrum* as it now appeared. (After all, the two Antiochene textual branches, 19-108 and 93, demonstrate variation among themselves in the spelling of both preceding articles.) The use of two *nomina sacra* in the same verse is unusual, at least in our dataset, but is explicable if the text is a doublet conservatively preserving two traditions that each attested *nomina sacra*.

As such, while Hanhart has Ἰσραήλ, which is supported by all the Old Greek MSS, the superior text is likely to be ἱλῆμ, which can account for the variations in the Antiochene text and the relationship of the Old Greek MSS to the Tiberian text. This form is not a reconstruction, but a minor variant, as the Antiochene doublet is interpreted here as a witness to an early attestation of this form at this place in the Old Greek text.

The suggested development ἱλῆμ > ἱῆλ may have been conditioned by the exegetical factors discussed earlier, and the sequence of events might be reconstructed as follows. First, the original translation attested ποιῆσαι μετὰ τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ with the intended meaning ‘to do in dealing with Jerusalem’, reflecting a straightforward interpretation of the Hebrew  $\text{בְּ}$  preposition. As noted earlier, ‘Jerusalem’ is a more natural fit with this exegesis, because Jerusalem is the recipient of Nehemiah’s actions; he is dealing with the city of Jerusalem. If the noun was replaced with the *nomen sacrum* and the clause ποιῆσαι μετὰ τὴν ἱλῆμ was interpreted by some early copyists as ‘to do along with Jerusalem’, then as also noted earlier, ‘Israel’ is a more natural fit with this exegesis because the people of Israel are acting alongside Nehemiah; they are dealing with the city of Jerusalem together. This psychological factor may encourage the replacement of one *nomen sacrum* with the other, which I have argued is a plausible development that might arise due to phonemic and/or graphical factors. Once ἱλῆμ had developed to ἱῆλ, the change in gender τὴν > τοῦ was a harmonising slip. It is not even necessary to assume this step occurred separately to the development ἱλῆμ > ἱῆλ. If a scribe was copying several words at a time, and ἱῆλ were mis-read (or mis-heard) for ἱλῆμ, then it is quite natural that they would simply write the *nomen sacrum* with what they considered to be the correct article.

The specific question of whether Ἰσραήλ or Ἱερουσαλήμ is the best text in 2 Esd 12,12 is not of great significance in and of itself. However, the above discussion illustrates two things. First, the text and interpretation put forward here, ποιῆσαι μετὰ τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ ‘to do in dealing with

Jerusalem', agrees with the noun in the Tiberian text and makes sense of the  $\text{ב}$  preposition. However, it rests on scant external evidence. In contrast, the traditional text and interpretation, ποιῆσαι μετὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ 'to do along with Israel', disagrees with the noun in the Tiberian text and does not make sense of the  $\text{ב}$  preposition, but does enjoy the support of almost the entire MS tradition. This situation illustrates the decision Septuagint text critics must make of the relative weight to give external support for a reading against the explanatory power a reading can have for the relationship between the Greek text and its presumed Hebrew *Vorlage*.

Secondly, the above discussion illustrates how *nomina sacra* can influence textual transmission. Whatever the most convincing text is for the noun being considered at 2 Esd 12,12, the use of abbreviation for these words is a factor that should be considered in the recovery of the original text and the reconstruction of the history of transmission. Further matters of investigation that arise are the extent to which the *nomina sacra*, IHΛ, IHMA, IHAM, are confused for one another elsewhere, and whether this phenomenon is liable to occur with other abbreviations.

University of Cambridge  
Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies  
Sidgwick Avenue  
Cambridge CB3 9DA

Peter Daniel MYERS

#### SUMMARY

At 2 Esd 12,12 (Neh 2,12), main text of Hanhart's critical edition of 2 Esdras has Ἰσραήλ equivalent to  $\text{לִירוּשָׁלַם}$ . There are various possible explanations for this. The author introduces a possibility not previously considered, that the form Ἰσραήλ is due to the influence of *nomina sacra* on Greek textual transmission.

## THE “SIGN FROM HEAVEN” AND THE “BREAD FROM HEAVEN” (MARK 8,10-13)

### I. INTRODUCTION

The puzzling quality of Mark’s narrative provides continual fuel for Markan scholarship. A common perception among interpreters is that the narrative is surrounded by an undeniable aura of mystery, made evident in its many elusive aspects. Most importantly, many recognise that such elusiveness is somehow integral to the very fabric of meaning of the Gospel <sup>1</sup>. Where clarity is missing, there lies the evangelist’s invitation for the reader to understand.

A good example of such elusiveness is the story about the Pharisees’ demand for a sign from heaven in Mk 8,10-13. In an apparently trivial trip, Mark’s Jesus crosses the sea to a place called Dalmanutha only to be confronted with an ambiguous request from the Pharisees, returning immediately afterward to the “other side”. Much of the story is left unclear. The exact nature of the sign in view is not self-evident, and the reasons for the request and for its refusal are also left unstated in the story. In addition, the function of the story in its literary context is somewhat uncertain, since it is oddly situated between the second feeding of the multitudes (8,1-9) and the rebuke of the disciples’ incomprehension regarding the significance of the feedings (8,14-21). The arrangement seems to invite the reader to interpret the story in relation to its bracketing counterparts, or at least to connect the three stories together. This relationship however is not at all self-evident. How does the request relate to the feedings? Further, given that the story precedes the climactic moment in the depiction of the disciples’ incomprehension and is connected to it though the leaven saying, how does the Pharisees’ request relate to the disciples’ incomprehension <sup>2</sup>?

<sup>1</sup> Examples include: T.A. BURKILL, *Mysterious Revelation. An Examination of the Philosophy of St. Mark’s Gospel* (Ithaca, NY 1963); J. MARCUS, “Mark 4:10-12 and Marcan Epistemology”, *JBL* 103 (1984) 557-574; L.C. SWEAT, *The Theological Role of Paradox in the Gospel of Mark* (Library of New Testament Studies; London 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Matthew and Luke locate the request within the Beelzebul story, which is a more natural context given the debate regarding authority (Matt 12,38; Luke 11,16). Matthew also has a second request after a feeding (Matt 16,1) but other qualifications are added. The alterations might reflect an early attempt to clarify the meaning of the request.

Further insight may be gained into these questions when one pays attention to the intersection of Mark’s literary arrangement with his employment of a scriptural framework. With this in view, I will argue that the Exodus narratives about the giving of the manna and its traditional development provide the conceptual framework for Mark’s depiction of the Pharisee’s request — a link observed in the manner in which the story is narrated and located within its immediate literary context. Such a referent affords a reasonable explanation for both the internal logic of the controversy and its function within the Markan arrangement of the narrative sequence, opening up a Christological dimension to this conflict story.

## II. HISTORY OF RESEARCH

The most crucial interpretative question is the meaning of the request. Scholars commonly assess the issue by focusing on one or another aspect of the expression σημεῖον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ — namely, either the nature of the sign and its request, or its origins as being “from heaven”. The interpretations often entail the reconstruction of a plausible historical scenario within which the request can be explained.

The most common interpretation is that the expression “from heaven” is a circumlocution for “from God”. Those who advocate this reading do not see in the expression any indication of a specific sign, only of its divine origin<sup>3</sup>. A variation of this idea is the suggestion that the expression carries “eschatological” or “apocalyptic” connotations. As J. Gnilka points out, “Es handelt sich regelmäßig um endzeitliche Unheilszeichen kosmischen Ausmaßes”<sup>4</sup>. The qualifier ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ then points to its nature as a unique cosmic display whose main function is to confirm that such a sign could only have one agent — God himself — and that it alone would authenticate one’s authority as divine<sup>5</sup>. A more specific alternative is proposed by J. Gibson, who analyses the expression ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ in a broader context, including instances where the phrase does not necessarily refer to a “sign”. While acknowledging that the expression indeed carries apocalyptic overtones, he goes further in stating that the

<sup>3</sup> See R.A. GUELICH, *Mark 1–8:26* (Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas, TX 1989) 414; R.H. STEIN, *Mark* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI 2008) 375; R.H. GUNDRY, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI 1993) 402.

<sup>4</sup> J. GNILKA, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 306.

<sup>5</sup> GNILKA, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, 306. See also D.R.A. HARE, *Mark* (Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville, KY 1996) 91.

qualifier identifies the sign as a phenomenon that “embodies or signals the onset of aid and comfort for God’s elect and/or the wrath that God was expected to let loose against his enemies and those who threaten his people”, in an act of divine vengeance <sup>6</sup>. Also advocating for a revolutionary sense, J. Marcus sees the first thirteen verses of Mark 8 as “following the order of the events in Exodus 16,1 – 17,7” <sup>7</sup>. This leads him to interpret the request in light of the praxis of sign-prophets, as a re-enactment of an exodus event in order to initiate a political revolt.

From another angle, O. Linton dismisses the full expression “sign from heaven” as a starting point, because he sees it only as an idiosyncratic Markan idiom. Instead, he turns to more general “phrases found in undisputed sayings of Jesus”, namely “sign”, “seek a sign” and “give a sign” <sup>8</sup>. He concludes that signs were meant to function as mechanisms of control, which guarantee the truth of a certain utterance <sup>9</sup>. Thus it must be assumed that what elicited the Pharisees’ request was something that “Jesus had said or done that people found too strange to be accepted” <sup>10</sup>. Finally, in a more redactional approach, J. Swetnam interprets the expression in Mark in relation to the Synoptic parallels (Matt 16,1-4; Luke 11,16.29) <sup>11</sup>, more specifically to the “sign of Jonah” exception, which Swetnam understands as a reference to the resurrection <sup>12</sup>. Assuming the original form of the *logion* as better reflected in the Matthean and Lucan versions, Swetnam argues that Mark intentionally omits the reference to the sign of Jonah in order to avoid presenting the resurrection as an authentication of Jesus’ identity. The absence of the exception is understood as a reflection of Mark’s silence concerning the resurrection, also evident in his somewhat abrupt ending <sup>13</sup>.

These interpretations are not without limitations. First, it seems inappropriate to evaluate the thrust of Mark’s story based on an alleged omission. Without offering a positive explanation of the request itself, Swetnam’s interpretation does not make sense of the Gospel as a self-standing

<sup>6</sup> J.B. GIBSON, “Jesus’ Refusal to Produce a ‘Sign’ (Mk 8,11-13)”, *JSNT* 38 (1990) 37-66, here 45. Gibson restricts his investigation to the LXX and the New Testament, thus overlooking the reference in Philo to the manna as coming ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ.

<sup>7</sup> J. MARCUS, *Mark 1-8. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (The Anchor Yale Bible; New York 2002) 505.

<sup>8</sup> O. LINTON, “Demand for a Sign from Heaven (Mk 8,11-12 and parallels)”, *ST* 19 (1965) 112-129, here 119.

<sup>9</sup> LINTON, “Demand”, 127.

<sup>10</sup> LINTON, “Demand”, 127.

<sup>11</sup> J. SWETNAM, “No Sign of Jonah”, *Bib* 66 (1985) 126-130.

<sup>12</sup> SWETNAM, “No Sign”, 130.

<sup>13</sup> SWETNAM, “No Sign”, 130.

narrative, requiring a comparison with the parallels and a particular view of Synoptic relations for explaining Jesus' refusal <sup>14</sup>. Second, although an authenticating purpose is obviously implied, it is too vague simply to say that the request is for an eschatological sign from God to confirm Jesus' claims, given that virtually all the miracles in Mark fits that description in one way or another <sup>15</sup>. Given that the story is located in a context characterised by a sequence of miracles, there must be something more distinct about the sign in view. Third, the suggestion that the sign is meant to validate a particular utterance leaves us with the problem that no such utterance can be found in the episode or surrounding stories. Finally, the readings offered by Gibson and Marcus, although providing a more helpful historical frame of reference, do not fit easily within the story's more immediate literary context, given that nothing in the plot sequence suggests any allusion to a "vengeance" or a "divine warrior" motif or hints at a sense of political revolt.

Conspicuously absent from the discussion is the relationship of the story with the preceding feeding of the four thousand <sup>16</sup>. Among the studies surveyed, Marcus is the only one to associate the story with the feedings. However, although prompted to consider the influence of the Exodus narratives by the terms "testing" and "this generation", Marcus does not directly associate the sign with the feedings. Instead he interprets it against the backdrop of Jewish sign-prophecy, as a demand for an "exodus-like deliverance that will be accompanied by the destruction of pagan oppressors" <sup>17</sup>.

In summary, the interpretations above fall short of providing a concrete explanation for the story, either by being too broad or by lacking a clearer explanation of Mark's narrative strategy. The story seems to demand a more specific referent. Given the overwhelming sequence of deeds widely witnessed by the people, including the Pharisees themselves (cf. 2,1-12; 3,1-6), it is likely that the request does not refer to "any kind of sign" but to a very specific sign that would validate Jesus' claims in a way that no other sign already provided by Jesus would. The fact that Jesus refuses the sign corroborates this reading. He knows what they are asking for, and he will not provide it. Given this implied specificity, when evaluating

<sup>14</sup> The different accounts could have stemmed from two distinct traditions. See GUELICH, *Mark 1-8*, 411.

<sup>15</sup> See the so-called "Messianic Apocalypse" in 4Q521 where the healing of the blind is listed as one of the eschatological blessings.

<sup>16</sup> Gibson mentions the issue in passing but dismisses the possibility of assigning any great significance to the arrangement, seeing it, instead, as traditional. J.B. GIBSON, *The Temptations of Jesus in Early Christianity* (JSNTSup; Sheffield 1995) 124-125.

<sup>17</sup> MARCUS, *Mark 1-8*, 505.

the expression σημείον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, one should not focus on its parts in isolation; whatever the nature of the request, its central thrust is communicated precisely in the full expression. Therefore, we must look for a referent specific enough to account for the expression as a whole — “a sign” that is “from heaven”. Moreover, attention should be given to the placement of the story at this particular point in the narrative. Whatever the nature of the request, it should relate in some way to its surrounding context, particularly with the feedings. In other words, the interpretation has to make sense within Mark’s narrative strategy.

### III. TEXT, SUBTEXT AND TRADITION

The assessments above have in common their essential methodological approach: they are all aiming at recovering the historical sense of the Pharisees’ request, proposing an interpretation derived either from a reconstructed historical context or from a particular understanding of Mark’s sources and redactional activity. In contrast to these methodologies, the present study proposes a different avenue of interpretation — namely, one that privileges the narrative as it stands in its final form, paying special attention to its literary context and intertextual dynamics, in order to determine what kind of sign is in view and what explains Jesus’ rather rash response. Regardless of the form in which Mark received the story from tradition, its meaning within the Gospel’s own story-world is well worth considering. Furthermore, the evangelist’s recurrent use of scriptural frameworks to situate his account theologically shows that scriptural traditions play a fundamental role in shaping his storytelling<sup>18</sup>. Therefore the narrative and its intertextual relations compose the primary scope of the present investigation.

Identifying potential scriptural allusions in a text is always a complex task. Any intertextual link lacking a clear quotation formula requires a

<sup>18</sup> The importance of the use of the Scriptures in the Gospel has been widely recognized. See U. MAUSER, *Christ in the Wilderness*. The Wilderness Theme in the Second Gospel and Its Basis in the Biblical Tradition (London 1963); H.C. KEE, “The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11–16”, *Jesus und Paulus*. Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag (eds. E. GRÄSSER – E.E. ELLIS) (Göttingen 1975) 165–185; W. SWARTLEY, “The Structural Function of the Term ‘Way’ in Mark”, *The New Way of Jesus*. Essays Presented to Howard Charles (ed. W. KLASSEN) (Newton, KS 1980); J. MARCUS, *The Way of the Lord*. Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark (Louisville, KY 1993) 12–47; R.E. WATTS, *Isaiah’s New Exodus and Mark* (WUNT II/88; Tübingen 1997) 53–90; R.B. HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX 2016).



heuristic model that provides the guidelines for its identification and hermeneutical function. Stefan Alkier, who understands intertextuality in reference to the broader field of semiotics, suggests that such links (or "intertextual dispositions") relate to "everything that raises questions in a given text, questions that can be answered with the help of other texts" <sup>19</sup>. For Alkier, the identification of these intertextual dispositions arises from a careful intratextual analysis, which will allow the reader to notice certain gaps, prompting them to consider other texts as the foundational encyclopedia of knowledge from which the said text is drawing. Within Alkier's model, one of the possible ways to evaluate these links is from a production-oriented perspective <sup>20</sup>, whereby the connections investigated are established by actual textual signs and operate within a plausible scenario of textual relations. Given that there are enough links in the narrative that point to Mark's awareness and employment of the Exodus tradition (see below), the present study proposes to investigate the intertextual relations on a text-production level, seeking to understand how texts from this tradition are activated by certain intertextual signposts in Mark and how they inform the gaps identified — namely, the thrust of the Pharisees' request, Jesus' response to it, and the function of the story in the narrative.

In order to ascertain the plausibility of the intertextual event, Richard Hays and Dale Allison have individually provided methodological guidelines for identifying less explicit intertextual links <sup>21</sup>. Although somewhat distinct, both methodologies are equally focused on contextual connections — such as similar circumstances, key words or phrases, narrative structure and thematic coherence — as primary points of intertextual activation. Therefore, while an isolated word might constitute an echo on its own, its identification becomes more plausible if it is part of a wider web of associated elements, which together point the reader to a given scriptural referent sharing the same conceptual framework.

These associated elements will often point to a dominant subtext. However, some contextual frameworks are further expanded as the original text is appropriated and interpreted in other texts over time <sup>22</sup>. When a

<sup>19</sup> S. ALKIER, "Zeichen der Erinnerung — Die Genealogie in Mt 1 als intertextuelle Disposition", *Bekennnis und Erinnerung*. Festschrift zum 75. Geburtstag von Hans-Friedrich Weiss (Hgs. K.-M. BULL – E. REINMUTH) (Rostocker Theologische Studien 16; Münster 2004) 119, cited in M. SCHNEIDER, "How Does God Act? Intertextual Readings of 1 Corinthians 10", *Reading the Bible Intertextually* (Waco, TX 2009) 35-52, 44.

<sup>20</sup> S. ALKIER, "Intertextuality and the Semiotics of Biblical Texts", *Reading the Bible Intertextually* (Waco, TX 2009) 3-21, 9-11.

<sup>21</sup> R.B. HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT 1993) 29-32; D.C. ALLISON, JR., *The New Moses. A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis, MN 1993) 21-23.

<sup>22</sup> See D.A. KNIGHT, "Tradition History", *ABD*, vol. 6, p. 634.

given text is particularly prominent as a formative tool in the construction of social identity, it tends to be further developed in the form of a tradition<sup>23</sup>. In this tradition, although the original text might appear reshaped — sometimes even giving birth to new associated concepts — its original contours are essentially preserved. For example, later appropriations of the Exodus narrative — such as the ones observed in Psalm 105 and Isa 43,16-17 — even though presenting nuanced transformations — still maintain the distinctive language and imagery of the original account (e.g. “signs and wonders”, and “way in the sea”). Thus, however innovative the development of an idea may present itself in the tradition, there is a series of fixed elements that guarantee its relationship with the original. These texts together generate a conceptual framework, an essential encyclopedia of knowledge for those who share in its ideology, allowing them to draw from the wider tradition itself instead of a single subtext.

This is the logic of Mark’s appropriation of the manna narratives and their traditional development. As the original feeding events are recalled and interpreted in the tradition, a pool of images and concepts becomes available to the evangelist for his understanding of the identity and ministry of Jesus.

Therefore the methodology employed here comprises the identification of the contextual clues in the text of Mark 8,10-13, which together lead us to consider the manna tradition as the conceptual framework adopted in the text of the Gospel as its encyclopedia of knowledge<sup>24</sup>. Ultimately though, the intertextual analysis, as Hays’ points out, should be evaluated in light of its potential to illuminate the reading of the text and its surrounding discourse, which Hays terms the criterion of satisfaction<sup>25</sup>. It is my contention that the elusive sense of the Pharisees request in Mark 8,10-13 and its function within the immediate literary context are illuminated by the projection of the manna tradition as its conceptual background.

With this heuristic model in place we will now focus on the story’s internal elements whose association points us to the manna tradition as an interpretative paradigm for the expression “sign from heaven”. Once the

<sup>23</sup> L. Huizenga proposes a revision of Hays’ methodology to accommodate intertextual connections with multiple texts in a given tradition. L.A. HUIZENGA, *The New Isaac. Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum; Leiden 2009) 61-65.

<sup>24</sup> In assessing the tradition, I will not concern myself with its precise chronological trajectory, but with the wider conceptual pool that emerges from it, insofar as its availability to Mark is plausible.

<sup>25</sup> HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture*, 31-32.

link is properly established, we will proceed to show how the interpretation aids us in understanding the meaning of the story and its function within Mark's narrative.

#### IV. THE MANNA TRADITION AND THE "SIGN FROM HEAVEN"

The Pharisee's request in Mark feeds into the larger theme of authority, which is developed from the very outset of the narrative. Although "sign" is not Mark's favourite term for describing Jesus' wonder-working activity, it is clear that his "mighty deeds", which draw the spotlight in the first eight chapters of the Gospel, function in a self-disclosing manner. This can be observed particularly in the depiction of peoples' reactions to the deeds, which normally lead to deliberations regarding Jesus' identity and authority (1,21-27; 2,1-12; 4,35-41; 6,1-6).

With regard to the opponents, the deeds are significantly demonstrative. In response to the Pharisees' implied accusation of blasphemy in 2,6-7, Jesus heals the paralytic so that they may know (ἵνα εἰδῇτε) that he has authority to forgive sins. Similarly, his healing of the man with a withered hand (3,1-6) is performed before the eyes of hard-hearted Pharisees as an authentication of his lordship over the Sabbath (cf. 2,28). Furthermore, it is Jesus' authority as corroborated by his powerful deeds that becomes the target of the opponents' attempt to discredit him in 3,22-30. In addition, the other characters in the narrative are also led to reflections on the nature of Jesus' authority and identity when confronted with his deeds (1,21-27; 4,35-41; 6,1-6).

Therefore it is implicit in Mark's narrative that Jesus' deeds are the means of his self-disclosure and it is against such an assumption that the Pharisees' request should be understood <sup>26</sup>. However, given that so many "signs" have been witnessed by many (including the opponents themselves), the request cannot be for just one more deed, but for a unique sign, which would finally suffice as a demonstration of Jesus' divine authority in the eyes of his opponents <sup>27</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Although not labeled as signs, Jesus' deeds function as such. Cf. GIBSON, "Jesus' Refusal", 41. Mark seems to reserve the σημεῖον language to convey a negative connotation. Thus, the Pharisees ask for a σημεῖον to test Jesus, and false prophets offer σημεῖα to lead people astray (13,22). The use of the σημεῖον language fosters the distinction between what Jesus does as self-motivated acts of disclosure and deliverance, on the one hand, and the sort of demonstration the Pharisees are demanding, on the other.

<sup>27</sup> It has been argued that there is an essential difference between δυνάμεις and σημεῖα in the narrative, the latter referring to eschatological demonstrations such as wars, earthquakes and strange phenomena in heaven: V.K. ROBBINS, "Dynamis and sēmeia in Mark",

The request for a sign is qualified in relation to its object and its character:

- A) OBJECT: the request is for
  - i) a “sign” (σημεῖον)
  - ii) “from heaven” (ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ)
  - iii) which is “given” (δοθήσεται)
- B) CHARACTER: the request constitutes
  - i) a “testing” (πειράζοντες)
  - ii) by “this generation” (ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη)

These descriptive qualifiers constitute the instruments of control for the following identification of the manna tradition as the conceptual framework of the Pharisees’ request in Mark.

### 1. *The Manna as a God-given Sign from Heaven*

Although “signs” (תּוֹטָ, σημεῖα) in the Old Testament are sometimes linked to a specific divine utterance (Judg 6,17; 2 Kgs 20,8; Isa 7,11), these are not the only circumstances in which they are offered. In Exodus, signs are given to Pharaoh and Israel both as an authentication of YHWH’s commission of Moses (Exod 4,8; 7,9), and most importantly, as the means of YHWH’s self-disclosure, being performed so that both the Egyptians and the Israelites might “know that I am YHWH” (7,5; 10,2)<sup>28</sup>. Hence, the giving or performance of a sign is meant to verify divine agency, especially YHWH’s saving acts<sup>29</sup>. In other words, signs are the irrefutable proof that YHWH is “at work”<sup>30</sup>.

The signs play a fundamental role in Israel’s formative experiences in the wilderness. Seen in conjunction with the signs of deliverance performed in Egypt, the wilderness signs — especially those related to YHWH’s provision — became the means by which YHWH’s faithfulness to his people could be verified. In this context, the manna and quail are given so that “you shall know that I am YHWH your God” (Exod 16,12). This language, which echoes the revelatory function of YHWH’s signs

BR 18 (1973) 5-20, here 17. However, as will be argued below, “signs” are a common designation for divine miraculous interventions in the Hebrew Bible and not a specific language for strange phenomena.

<sup>28</sup> See also Exod 7,17; 8,10.22; 9,14.29; 14,4.18.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Deut 4,34; 7,19; 11,3; 26,8; 34,11; Neh 9,10; Ps 78,43; 135,9; Jer 32,20-21.

<sup>30</sup> For this reason, the giving of signs by false prophets in order to lead people to idolatry (Deut 13,1-5) is understood as God testing his people. Since the ultimate purpose of the signs is to reveal YHWH as the one God, the idolatrous conduct of the sign-prophet itself would expose him as false. This is the logic standing behind Mark 13,22.

against the Egyptians, conveys YHWH's self-disclosing purpose, meant to prove his faithfulness to wavering Israel.

The manna itself becomes a permanent token of God's faithfulness for generations to come, of which a portion is to be kept so that "they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness" (Exod 16,32). The emphasis on "seeing the bread" testifies to the "sign" character of the manna, which serves as a visual reminder of God's provision in the wilderness<sup>31</sup>. Further, in later recapitulations of YHWH's deeds in the Exodus, the giving of the manna is alluded to as an instrument of YHWH's "salvation" (σωτήριον, Lxx Ps 77,22, cf. vv. 17-24), set side by side with the "wonders" (θαυμάσια) performed in Egypt (77,12, cf. vv. 11-16). Therefore, it seems clear that in the Exodus accounts and its biblical interpretations, the giving of the manna functions as an authenticating instrument of YHWH's agency in his deliverance and provision for his people, becoming a perpetual reminder of his faithfulness.

Furthermore, the manna carries a unique significance for the perception of its heavenly origins. From its very first appearance in Exodus 16, the manna is conceived as "bread from heaven" (Gr. ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) coming as a result of YHWH's supernatural intervention (16,4)<sup>32</sup>. As the tradition develops, the bread's heavenly origins are interpreted as a reference to its divine character. It is the ἄρτος οὐρανοῦ (Lxx Pss 77,24; 104,40; cf. Neh 9,15), the ἄρτος ἀγγέλων (Ps 77,25; 4 Ezra 1,19-20), created in the beginning of times ('Abot R. Nat. 5,6) and given by God himself, "able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste" (Wis 16,20). The idealised manna then becomes an eschatological symbol of the age to come in later Jewish literature, expected to be restored by Elijah (*Mek. Exod.* 16,33), and reproduced as a messianic sign (2 Bar. 29,1-8; *Qoh. Rab.* 1,9).

This idealisation led to allegorical interpretations of the manna as a symbol of God's word and wisdom. Philo, who understood the manna as "the most universal of all things" (*Leg.* 3.175) and "the primary genus of everything" (*Leg.* 2.86), interpreted its heavenly origins as the very

<sup>31</sup> The manna is listed as one of the signs and wonders performed in the Exodus in Ps 105,40. Childs affirms that the reference to signs should be understood as including far more than just the plagues in Egypt; it also establishes an immediate bridge to the wilderness tradition. See B.S. CHILDS, "Deuteronomical Formulae of the Exodus Traditions", *Hebräische Wortforschung. Festschrift zum 80 Geburtstag von Walter Baumgartner* (SVT 16; Leiden 1967) 30-39.

<sup>32</sup> The image of objects (e.g., fire or stone) coming down ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ as a result of divine action is recurrent in the Old Testament, usually functioning either as YHWH's instrument of judgment (Gen 19,24; Josh 10,11) or as authentication of an individual (1 Kgs 18,38; 2 Kgs 1,10).

expression of God's nature (*Leg.* 3.162; cf. *Leg.* 3.175; *Mut.* 258-259). For him, the fact that the bread comes ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ refers to the unique power of God who, "rains down the food from heaven (ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ) without the cooperation of any other being" (*Mut.* 258-259), contradicting the natural order of things (*Congr.* 173). As Peder Borgen notes, Philo's interpretations parallels the haggadic traditions<sup>33</sup>, where God's giving of bread "from heaven" constituted a "change in the natural order of things", effected out of his love for Israel (*Mek. Exod.* 16.4)<sup>34</sup>. Causing bread to come from above is a divine prerogative that attests to YHWH's supremacy and care for his people.

The final descriptive marker of the object of the request in Mark is the divine passive δοθήσεται. Even though δίδωμι is the default verb to identify the performance of signs (e.g. Mark 13,20; Gen 9,12; Exod 7,9; 8,19; Is 7,14), it carries extra weight when it comes to the description of the divine bread. In Exodus 16, there is an emphasis on YHWH's direct agency in the giving (תַּן, δίδωμι) of the manna. In order to expose the people's rebellion against YHWH, Moses calls attention to the fact that YHWH himself is the one who "gives" bread and meat (Exod 16,8.15). Moreover, YHWH's generous "bread gift" is contrasted with Israel's rebelliousness elsewhere in the tradition (Neh 9,15; Ps 78,24). The emphasis on "giving" then works together with the description of the heavenly origins of the bread, reinforcing the "sign" character of the miraculous feeding. The manna comes "from heaven" because it is "given" by YHWH himself. It is a unique expression of God's power and provision — a "sign" whose divine character testifies to YHWH's agency, since it can only be given by him.

## 2. The Manna and Israel's testing of YHWH

If, on the one hand, the giving of the manna is understood as a sign of YHWH's faithfulness to his people, it is also linked to Israel's rebellion<sup>35</sup>. In Exodus 16, the manna is given in response to Israel's grumbling in the wilderness — an event that becomes paradigmatic in the tradition<sup>36</sup>. The manna appears in conjunction with the language of "testing" (נִסּוּ, πειράζω)

<sup>33</sup> The connection implies a consensual traditional understanding of the manna observed in several different writings. Cf. P. BORGES, *Bread from Heaven. An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* (SNT; Leiden 1965) 7-27.

<sup>34</sup> See also *Exod. Rab.* 25.2.

<sup>35</sup> B.J. MALINA, *The Palestinian Manna Tradition* (Leiden 1968) 24.

<sup>36</sup> The episode is recalled in later reflections on Israel's rebellion (Nehemiah 9; Psalm 78).

in an ironic narrative pattern. In the first occurrence in Exodus 16, YHWH announces the giving of the manna so that "I may test (πειράσω) them" (16,4). As the narrative unfolds, however, there is a conspicuous reversal and it is Israel's testing of YHWH that ends up being emphasised.

Israel's grumbling against Moses — ultimately an affront to YHWH himself (16,8) — is part of a cyclical pattern of expressions of unfaithfulness. In this pattern, based on an idealized recollection of their life in Egypt, the people express their complaint, usually regarding a shortage of, or discontent with, the available resources (Exod 17,3; Num 11,4-5; 14,2-3,22; 20,2-5; 21,5). This resistance is identified as "testing" for the first time at Massah (Exod 17,1-7), a place whose very name is derived from Israel's defiance of YHWH. Here, the core of the testing is identified: "they tested the LORD by saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'" (17,7) <sup>37</sup>. "Testing YHWH" involves not only the ungrateful complaint amidst dire circumstances, but also the underlying demand for proof of YHWH's presence <sup>38</sup>. Therefore, in the narratives of Exodus 16–17 an ironic pattern of testing is observed: while YHWH "tests" Israel with provision, Israel "tests" YHWH with unwarranted demands.

The Book of Numbers further develops this association between the manna and Israel's testing of YHWH. Treating the manna as "worthless bread" (21,5), the Israelites are twice punished with acts of judgment (11,4-35; 21,4-9). Further, their attitude against the bread is interpreted in the rabbinic tradition as part of Israel's ten testings of YHWH mentioned in Num 14,22 <sup>39</sup>.

The association of the manna with Israel's testing comes full circle in the Psalms. Psalm 78 draws an explicit connection between the two motifs <sup>40</sup>. The psalm recounts Israel's history from the crossing of the Reed Sea to the building of the temple, whereby a contrast is advanced between God's merciful attitude and Israel's rebellion <sup>41</sup>. This recollection of the rebellion against YHWH has a very specific purpose. It is set as a teaching for the generations to come so that they may avoid falling into the same perverse behaviour of their fathers (78,7-8). In the psalmist's appeal to this historical reflection, the fathers are described as a "stubborn

<sup>37</sup> See also Deut 8,2-3,16.

<sup>38</sup> See J.I. DURHAM, *Exodus* (Word Biblical Commentary; Waco, TX 1987) III, 231-232.

<sup>39</sup> So *Arakhin* 15A. Cf. G.B. GRAY, *Numbers* (ICC; Edinburgh 1912).

<sup>40</sup> See also LXX Ps 105,14, where the craving of the wilderness generation is described as "testing" (ἐπειράσαν τὸν θεόν).

<sup>41</sup> This liturgical psalm is a good example of the importance of the manna in the tradition. See M. DAHOOD, *Psalms*. Introduction, Translation, and Notes (AB 16; Garden City, NY 1965) 78.



and rebellious generation” (γενεὰ σκολιὰ καὶ παραπικραίνουσα) who tests YHWH — a phrase that evokes Israel’s rebellion in Numbers 14 <sup>42</sup>.

In the cycle of tests mentioned in the psalm, Israel’s complaint about food is the first and most specific “test” with which Israel provokes YHWH to anger. As in the Exodus account, the testing is expressed as a challenge: “Can God spread a table in the wilderness? He struck the rock so that water gushed out [...]. Can he also give bread or provide meat for his people?” (78,19-20). The wording suggests that the provision of bread is understood as a more difficult miracle to be produced <sup>43</sup>, which confirms the idea that the manna constitutes a unique sign of YHWH’s sovereignty.

These recollections of Israel’s acts of rebellion are representative of a pervasive perception of the sins of Israel. Thus, the contention that occasioned the giving of the manna is conceived in Jewish tradition as a pivotal moment of “testing” by the “stubborn generation” of Israelites, which became a paradigm of unfaithfulness in the history of Israel’s relationship with YHWH. That this paradigm was part of early Christian reflections is verified in Paul’s paraenesis in 1 Corinthians 10, where he refers to the failures of the wilderness generation, identifying Israel’s experience with the manna as the ultimate expression of their “testing of Christ” (1 Cor 10,9, alluding to Num 21,4-9).

Therefore, the manna is a two-sided symbol. Positively, it is the token of YHWH’s faithfulness to Israel. Negatively, it exposes the faithlessness of the people who constantly doubt and resist him despite his persistent demonstration of power and care.

The above assessment shows a development of the manna narratives into a tradition where themes and motifs are appropriated and interpreted, composing a conceptual framework which associates the giving of the bread as a divine sign of YHWH’s care for his people and their rebellion against him. To be sure, given the uncertainties regarding the dating of some of the later writings (such as Philo and the rabbinic material) and of Mark itself, one should be careful in establishing too direct a link between them. However, the very fact that the manna tradition, as reflected in texts like Exodus, Numbers and Psalms, were being appropriated in the first century, with their essential contours preserved, gives us solid grounds for considering the influence of this tradition on Mark’s Gospel.

<sup>42</sup> For a full discussion of the significance of the “generation” language in Jewish and Christian writings, see E. LÖVESTAM, *Jesus and “This Generation”*. A New Testament Study (ConBNT; Stockholm 1995) XXV.

<sup>43</sup> A. HAKHAM – I.V. BERMAN, *The Bible: Psalms with the Jerusalem Commentary* (Jerusalem 2003) 192.

I suggest therefore that Mark's account of the Pharisaic request for a sign from heaven is articulated in an allusive way, whereby the descriptive markers that qualify the request echo the giving of the manna as conceptualised in the traditional development of the motif. On this reading, the description "from heaven", instead of functioning as a redundant circumlocution or a general eschatological reference, constitutes a reference to a very specific sign, whose heavenly origins are well established in the tradition. Indeed, in light of the prominence of the manna tradition and Mark's placement of the story in association with the motif of bread, it is possible that such a description would be enough to evoke in the mind of the reader/listener the image of the manna, given that no other sign would fit the description so closely. The manna is the only sign that fits the Markan description of a divine display "from heaven", the request for which constitutes a test that reflects the rebellious attitude of the wilderness generation.

It is now time to verify the plausibility of the manna as background referent for the request in Mark, in light of the narrative's broader intertextual dynamics and literary arrangement as well as the content of 8,10-13.

#### V. THE EXODUS TRADITION IN MARK 4-8

Although the conceptual intersection observed above fosters a consideration of the manna tradition as a possible influence on Mark's depiction of the Pharisees' request, one might object that the markers are merely "stock language", since the episode seems to lack a clear reference to the Exodus. However, the picture changes considerably when the full narrative context is taken into account, for when the whole section of Mark 4,35 – 8,21 is in view, the reading of the request as an echo of the manna fits the overall thrust of Mark's plot and provides a satisfactory referent to this rather elusive challenge.

Many have identified several allusions to the Exodus throughout this section <sup>44</sup>. In fact, although the whole narrative is permeated with references to the Torah and the Exodus tradition, chapters 4-8 present the highest register of Exodus allusions. The whole section is structured around Jesus' deeds on the sea and in the desert — settings which are especially productive of meaning in the narrative. First, the sea becomes

<sup>44</sup> Examples include: E.C. HOBBS, *The Gospel of Mark and the Exodus* (Ph.D. Diss.; The University of Chicago, 1958); MAUSER, *Christ in the Wilderness*, 103-143; SWARTLEY, "The Structural Function".

an allusive locus of epiphany as Jesus' ability to calm the storm (4,35-41), and his deliverance of the disciples "in the middle of the sea" <sup>45</sup> (6,45-52) evokes YHWH's authority over the sea and his rescue of Israel from Egypt (Exod 14,1-31; 15,8-19; Ps 107,26-30; Isa 51,9-11) <sup>46</sup>. Another possible echo of the sea-deliverance is found in the account of the healing of the Gerasene demoniac where, after a sea-miracle, a cohort of demons is drowned in the sea (Mark 5,1-20) <sup>47</sup>.

Second, the two feedings in the desert (6,30-44; 8,1-10), which depict the miraculous giving of bread and fish, evoke YHWH's feeding of his people in the wilderness (Exod 16,1-35; Num 11,4-34). Many features in these stories — the deserted place (ἔρημον), the reference to "sheep without a shepherd" (6,34; cf. Num 27,17), the arrangement of the crowd (6,40; cf. Exod 18,21.25; Deut 1,15), the numeric symbolism (twelve baskets symbolising twelve tribes), the reference to "three days" (8,2; cf. Exod 3,18; 5,3; 8,27; 15,22) and Jesus' concern with the people fainting "on the way" (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, 8,3) — allude to the Exodus tradition, particularly the wilderness feedings, as the primary scriptural framework in place.

The introduction of the Pharisees' request with its allusive description in a context with such a high register of Exodus allusions suggests that the episode should be read against the same scriptural backdrop. More to the point, the placement of the narrative between a feeding episode (8,1-10) and the recollection of both feedings (8,14-21) indicates that the episode of the Pharisee's testing of Jesus is intrinsically related to these evocative episodes.

## VI. THE MANNA AS THE 'SIGN' IN MARK'S NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

Jesus' encounter with the Pharisees in 8,10-13 occurs immediately after one of the sea-crossing journeys. Many scholars have noticed the rhetorical significance of these crossing events <sup>48</sup>. A noticeable pattern is

<sup>45</sup> See Exod 14,2.16.22.23.27.29; 15,8.19.

<sup>46</sup> See P.J. ACHTEMEIER, "Person and Deed: Jesus and the Storm-tossed Sea", *Int* 16 (1962) 169-176; B.F. BATTO, "The Sleeping God: An Ancient Near Eastern Motif of Divine Sovereignty", *Bib* 68 (1987) 153-177, here 175;

<sup>47</sup> See J.D.M. DERRETT, "Contributions to the Study of the Gerasene Demoniac", *JSNT* 3 (1979) 2-17; WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 159-160.

<sup>48</sup> R.M. FOWLER, *Loaves and Fishes*. The Function of the Feeding Stories in the Gospel of Mark (Chico, CA 1981) 57-68; W.H. KELBER, *The Kingdom in Mark*. A New Place and a New Time (Philadelphia, PA 1974) 48-65; E.S. MALBON, "The Jesus of Mark and the Sea of Galilee", *JBL* 103 (1984) 363-377.

established around these movements, consisting of the performance of a miracle followed by some sort of resistance to Jesus happening upon the arrival from a sea journey.

<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Deeds</i>	<i>Resistance</i>
5,1 (Gerasa)	5,1-13	5,14-20
5,21 (other side)	5,21-43	6,1-6
6,32 (desolate place)	6,32-44.45-52	6,52
6,53 (Gennesaret)	6,53-56	7,1-23
8,10 (Dalmanutha)	—	8,11-13

When Jesus arrives in Gerasa (5,1-20) he performs the exorcism of the Gerasene man, and he is immediately compelled to leave the region by the fearful people. Accordingly, when he arrives at “the other side” (5,21) two healing miracles (5,21-43) are followed by the rejection at his hometown (6,1-6). Upon his arrival at a “desolate place”, Jesus feeds the multitudes for the first time (6,30-44) and walks on the sea (6,45-52), where the fear and incomprehension of the disciples is emphasised. Jesus then arrives at Gennesaret where he heals many (6,53-56), being subsequently approached by the Pharisees who confront him about the tradition of the elders (7,1-23).

Finally we get to our story, which is initiated by Jesus’ arrival in Dalmanutha. Here the pattern is disrupted. Instead of the sequence of miracle-then-resistance, observed on the occasion of other arrivals, we now have the denial of a sign in the form of a direct confrontation. In a sense, the reader is denied a sign just as much as the Pharisees. This break in pattern points to an important shift in the plot: the overwhelming sequence of miracles is coming to an end, and those who witnessed them are now rebuked for not arriving at a proper understanding of Jesus’ identity. The Pharisees’ demand therefore signals this shift. The signs freely given as an expression of Jesus’ identity — the last of which was the emblematic feeding of the multitudes — are now withheld in the face of incredulity.

Another prominent feature in the sequence of chapters 6–8 is the “bread” motif. Of the twenty-one references to ἄρτος in the Gospel, seventeen occur between the first feeding in 6,30-44 and Jesus’ confrontations with the disciples in 8,14-21. After the first feeding the disciples witness Jesus walking on the water and fail to recognise him, which the author cryptically explains as a lack of understanding “about the loaves” (6,52). Further, after a fierce debate with the Pharisees, occasioned by the disciples “eating bread” with unwashed hands (7,2.5), Jesus departs into

Gentile territory and symbolically “gives bread” to a Syrophoenician woman (7,24-30). Finally, after the second feeding of the multitudes (and our interluding story), the disciples are rebuked for their lack of understanding of the bread miracles (8,14-21). The motif then serves as a key rhetorical feature. It functions allusively to evoke the feedings of Israel in the wilderness <sup>49</sup>, which is associated, metaphorically, with the theme of incomprehension <sup>50</sup>. It is precisely because of its allusive significance that the bread can be related to the theme of incomprehension. Its giving communicates something about Jesus’ identity, which is subject to understanding and acceptance.

When the two feeding stories are compared, it again becomes evident that our story seems to break a continuous thematic arrangement. After the first feeding, the bread motif is picked up in the following sea-crossing episode in relation to the disciples’ incomprehension. The same would happen after the second feeding story, if not for the “sign from heaven” episode <sup>51</sup>.

When the Pharisees’ request is understood in reference to the manna, the narrative flow is preserved. First, the manna as a referent connects the request to the preceding story, establishing a contrast between the giving of bread in 8,1-10 and its denial. Second, it prepares for the subsequent depiction of the disciples’ incomprehension in light of the Pharisees’ resistance to Jesus, a link established by the reference to the “leaven” of the Pharisees (8,14-21) <sup>52</sup>. In this arrangement, 8,10-13 and 8,14-21 stand as two sequential expressions of failure to assimilate Jesus’ self-disclosure through his feeding miracle — one by outsiders and another by insiders. The Pharisees fail by demanding a sign/bread from heaven, thereby denying the legitimacy of the feedings as a means of Jesus’ self-disclosure. The disciples are then warned about this kind of incredulity — referred to as the “leaven” of the Pharisees — but also betray a hardened heart regarding the significance of the feedings. Given that both Jesus’ warning

<sup>49</sup> M.D. HOOKER, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark* (Black’s New Testament Commentaries; London 1991) 418-419; MARCUS, *Mark 1-8*, 406; L.W. HURTADO, *Mark* (New International Biblical Commentary 2; Peabody, MA 1989) 100.

<sup>50</sup> J.M. BASSLER, “The Parable of the Loaves”, *JR* 66 (1986) 157-172, here 158, understands the loaves motif as functioning similarly to the parables.

<sup>51</sup> GUELICH, *Mark 1-8*, 412, has suggested that the placement of the sign from heaven story after the second feeding parallels 7,1-23 where a conflict story follows the first feeding. However, the arrangement does not constitute a parallel, given that between the first feeding and 7,1-23 there is a sea-crossing event with an emphasis on the disciples’ incomprehension.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. also the reference to “hardened hearts” employed in relation to both groups (3,5; 8,17).

in 8,15 and the disciples' incomprehension are informed by the bread motif, the proposed reading of the request as a reference to the manna makes sense of the whole sequence, maintaining the themes of revelation and understanding advanced by the motif. In other words, the bread, which stands for Jesus' self-disclosure, is given to the multitudes, denied to the Pharisees and misunderstood by the disciples.

## VII. THE MANNA TRADITION AND THE MEANING OF MARK 8,10-13

Having discussed the manna tradition as a conceptual framework in light of Mark's literary arrangement, we now move on to evaluate the language of Mark 8,10-13 and its internal logic. First, the request is for a sign "from heaven" (ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). Heaven as a "source" of divine authentication plays an important role in Mark. On the occasion of Jesus' baptism, the heavens are torn open and the Spirit descends upon him, followed by a voice ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, testifying to his divine sonship (1,10-11; cf. also 9,7). When questioned by the religious leaders from Jerusalem regarding the origins of his authority, Jesus proposes a question about the baptism of John, contrasting human authority with one that comes ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (11,29-30). Also suggestive is the fact that the first miraculous feeding is effected by Jesus' conspicuous "looking up to the heavens" (6,41; cf. 7,34). In this context, a "sign from heaven" denotes a marvelous act to be performed on the basis of the divine origins of Jesus' authority, which in Mark is intrinsically related to his identity. Hence, the request is for a sign whose heavenly origins will confirm beyond doubt the divine source of Jesus' authority. In the section 4,35 – 8,21, though, the feedings are the most important of Jesus' self-disclosing "signs". Understanding them and accepting the premise of Jesus' self-disclosure through them is imperative for a proper recognition of the nature of Jesus' identity and authority (6,45-52). Therefore, the Pharisees' request for a sign/bread verifiably "from heaven" immediately after the second feeding implies a denial of this highly symbolic sign as legitimate authentication of Jesus' divine authority.

Second, the verb διδομι carries important intratextual links when seen in this context. In the sequence leading up to the request, the verb persistently identifies the privileged position of the disciples, who are "given" two important things: the mystery of the kingdom of God (4,11), and the bread, which they are supposed to distribute to the people (6,41). These two elements are directly related to Jesus' self-disclosure, and their being "given" to the disciples ironically exposes their failed perception

of him <sup>53</sup>. Right after the mystery is given to them, the disciples fail to understand the parables (4,13; 7,18). Similarly, even though they are given the bread, they do not understand it (6,52; 8,16). In this context, the language creates an interesting revelatory dynamic where the mystery and the bread are “given” (and not understood) by the disciples, whereas the sign/bread is “not given” to the Pharisees.

Third, the participle *πειράζοντες* also has connections with allusive contexts in Mark. As Marcus rightly recognizes, the “testing” language is polyvalent — combining nuances of examination, temptation, and provocation <sup>54</sup> — and is further employed in Mark in relation to the Pharisees’ opposition to Jesus’ teaching (10,2; 12,15). However, it is in the first two instances where the language is employed in the Gospel that it achieves its full force. Both Jesus’ testing in the desert (1,12-13) and his first testing by the Pharisees’ appear in contexts pregnant with Exodus typology. From the perspective of the tradition, it is significant that in the Matthean account of the desert “testing” (Matt 4,1-4), the language is associated with the motif of bread and is followed by a quote from Deut 8,3, where a direct reference to the manna is found. This seems to corroborate our suggestion that the language of “testing” has the manna tradition as its essential conceptual framework. Although Mark does not develop the theme of bread in his account of Jesus’ first testing, it is likely that the desert setting, the “forty days” reference, and the service of angels, point to a typological appropriation of Israel’s experience in the Exodus <sup>55</sup>. Notably in the Exodus, Israel moves from being tested (16,4) to putting YHWH to the test (17,7). Thus, Mark seems to appropriate the theme of “testing” both to advance a typological portrayal of Jesus in relation to Israel — being subject to testing in the wilderness — and in relation to YHWH — being tested by an unbelieving people <sup>56</sup>. Therefore, even though Mark also employs the language more generally to identify the Pharisees’ attempt to discredit Jesus as a teacher, the nature of the testing in its initial articulation is informed by the conceptualisation of the theme in the Exodus tradition, probably stemming more specifically from the manna narratives.

<sup>53</sup> The disciples are also “given” authority over unclean spirits (6,7) but fail to exercise it in 9,18.

<sup>54</sup> MARCUS, *Mark 1–8*, 500.

<sup>55</sup> On the Exodus overtones in Mark 1,12-13, see M E. BORING, *Mark: A Commentary* (The New Testament Library; Louisville, KY 2006) 47; MAUSER, *Christ in the Wilderness*, 96-102.

<sup>56</sup> Although the desert testing has Satan as the agent, Jesus is led rather violently (*ἐκβάλλω*) to the desert by the Spirit (1,12), implying that the testing, although not perpetrated by YHWH, was certainly part of a divine agenda.



Finally, Jesus responds to the leaders' testing with a "deep sigh", followed by a rhetorical question and an oath formula. The hapax ἀναστενάζω is the subject of debate among scholars<sup>57</sup>. Some insight can be gained into the sense of the verb if the allusions to the wilderness generation are added to the equation. The sigh in vs. 12 is a response to testing, and it is marked by an oath formula. Similarly, the wilderness generation's testing of YHWH is often followed by an expression of divine anger (cf. Num 14,11-12.21-22; Pss 78,21[in relation to the manna].41; 95,10-11). Furthermore, the oath formula employed by the Markan Jesus to refuse the sign — εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον — is present in YHWH's responses to the rebellion of the wilderness generation (LXX Deut 1,35; Ps 94,11). The account then fits the discourse pattern employed in the Old Testament narratives and recollections of the rebellion of Israel in the desert.

In summary, both the literary arrangement and the story's content seem to provide a fitting context for an allusion to the giving of the manna. Conversely, the understanding of the request in reference to the manna affords a satisfactory reading of the narrative sequence. At this point in the narrative, the reader is already familiar with the people's persistent failure to respond positively to Jesus' self-disclosure through his mighty deeds and the Pharisees' ultimate rejection of his authority. The section of chapters 1–8 then culminates with a highly allusive sequence of deeds, in which the desert feedings stand out as the ultimate means of Jesus' self-disclosure. Mark 8,10-13, then, represents a climactic moment: after a feeding miracle, when all "ate and were satisfied"<sup>58</sup> (8,8), Jesus is confronted by unsatisfied representatives of "this generation" who "test" him by asking for yet another sign, this time one which is verifiably "from heaven". The overall picture is reminiscent of the Psalmist's recollection of the rebellion of the wilderness generation, who even after several demonstrations of YHWH's power, "sinned still more against him" and "tested God in their heart by demanding the food they craved" (Ps 78,17-18). Read in this context, Jesus' denial of the request becomes clearer. By requesting a sign/bread from heaven immediately after Jesus' second miraculous feeding, the Pharisees effectively call into question the legitimacy of the

<sup>57</sup> Some argue for a sense of anger: V. TAYLOR, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London 1952) 362; W.L. LANE, *The Gospel According to Mark* (The New London Commentary on the New Testament; London 1974) 277; HOOKER, *St. Mark*, 192. J.B. GIBSON, "Another Look at Why Jesus 'Sighs Deeply': anastēnazō in Mark 8:12a", *JTS* 47 (1996) 131-140, argues that the "Markan Jesus experienced something which tried not his patience but his faithfulness" (140).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Ps 78,29.

feedings as a valid authentication of Jesus' authority <sup>59</sup>. For this reason Jesus responds with an expression of divine anger, "sighing deeply" and pronouncing an oath refusing the sign.

One might object that there are discontinuities between the manna narratives and Mark 8,10-13. The testing is not included within the feeding story in the desert but comes after it. In addition, instead of granting the provision as YHWH does when tested by Israel, Jesus denies it. It should be pointed out, however, that the employment of the scriptural framework does not constitute an attempt to reproduce the manna narratives in mid-rashic fashion. Rather, the tradition serves as a conceptual framework with which the narrative engages creatively. The disjunction in setting creates a distinction between those who are fed by Jesus and the Pharisees who are denied his bread — which reinforces the characterisation of the authorities as outsiders <sup>60</sup>. As for the denial itself, it does not stand in complete discontinuity with the tradition. While it is true that YHWH gives bread to the people after they test him, the provision is ultimately a response to a legitimate need (Ex 15,22-26; 16,1-36; 17,1-7). Significantly, when the people complain about the food that has been given, the result is punishment through fiery serpents (Num 21,4-9). In both feeding miracles, Mark's Jesus acts out of compassion in response to the people's needs (6,34; 8,2). In the face of a defiant test by those who do not acknowledge his feeding, his response is negative. His bread has already been given to those who need it; the rebellious generation that demands it out of incredulity will not receive it.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study has proposed as its main argument that the story of the Pharisees' request for a "sign from heaven" is better understood in light of the manna tradition as its conceptual framework. As with many instances where scriptural allusions are investigated though, the implicit character of the intertextual event makes its identification a matter of plausibility and satisfaction <sup>61</sup>. Therefore I suggest the following summary as a list of reasons that justify the reading.

<sup>59</sup> HOOKER, *St. Mark*, 190-191, observes: "The juxtaposition of the two stories suggests that they should have known about the feeding".

<sup>60</sup> This distinction also explains why the "testing" does not happen in the desert, which is the locus of Jesus' emblematic self-disclosure.

<sup>61</sup> From the perspective of Gospels traditions, the plausibility of the reading is further strengthened by the fact that in all four Gospels the request for a sign is closely associated

First, the interpretation offers a specific referent for the elusive request of the Pharisees. The manna matches the descriptive qualifiers of the request with precision — a heavenly sign which uniquely connects the motifs of “testing” and “this generation” — establishing a complex allusive reference to Israel’s contentions with YHWH. Second, the reading situates the Pharisees’ request within a tradition solidly established in the Hebrew scriptures and prominent in first-century Judaism. Third, the interpretation sets the story in thematic continuity with its surrounding context, evoking the bread motif which is dominant in the section. Fourth, the manna as a referent provides a better framework for understanding the literary function of the story, establishing a connection between the Pharisees’ demand and the disciples’ incomprehension, which emerge together as sequential expressions of failure in relation to Jesus’ self-disclosure through his feeding miracles.

Finally, this reading enables a better understanding of the theological function of the story. Besides its more obvious role in portraying the growing conflict between Jesus and the Jewish establishment, the story serves the narrative’s Christological presentation. Through the depiction of Jesus being tested by a demand for a sign (bread) from heaven, one more element is added to his portrayal as the eschatological deliverer and bringer of the New Exodus<sup>62</sup>. In 8,10-13 Jesus is portrayed not only as the one who performs Exodus-like signs, but also as the one who faces similar resistance by those who witness them. In this sense, the story sharpens the portrayal of people’s reactions to Jesus’ self-disclosure, developing the narrative’s particular interest in the theme of understanding/incomprehension. If bread is a symbol that points to the understanding of Jesus’ identity, it is significant that the Pharisees never get it. Bread, like the mystery of the kingdom (4,11-12), is for those on the inside, once they finally understand.

University of Cambridge  
Cambridge, UK CB3 0DG

Mateus F. DE CAMPOS

with the bread motif. In John 6,25-34 the request for a sign clearly evokes the manna tradition. See R. BAUCKHAM, “John for Readers of Mark”, *The Gospels for All Christians*. Rethinking the Gospel Audiences (ed. R. BAUCKHAM) (Grand Rapids, MI 1998) 147-171.

<sup>62</sup> See R.B. HAYS, *Reading Backwards*. Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness (Waco, TX 2014) 17-33; WATTS, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 160-163; 226-233; MARCUS, *Mark 1-8*, 432; J.W. VOELZ, *Mark 1:1 – 8:26* (Concordia Commentary; Saint Louis, MO 2013) 428.

## SUMMARY

Mark 8,10-13 has attracted the attention of exegetes for its cryptic meaning and elusive literary function. The story seems to break a natural transition from the feeding of the multitudes (8,1-10) to the rebuke of the disciples' lack of understanding thereof (8,14-21). Even more elusive is the precise nature of the request. It is not self-evident what exactly is being asked, why it is asked, and why it is denied. This essay argues that the narratives about the manna and their traditional development provide Mark with a conceptual framework for the story, in line with the Christological concerns of the narrative.

## “HE SPOKE... FOREVER”: A HEBREW IDIOM IN LUKE 1,55

ἀντελάβετο Ἰσραὴλ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ,  
μνησθῆναι ἐλέους,  
καθὼς ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν,  
τῷ Ἀβραάμ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

He has helped Israel his servant,  
in order to <sup>1</sup> remember [his <sup>2</sup>] Mercy,  
As he spoke to our fathers,  
To Abraham and to his seed forever. (Luke 1,54-55)

### I. THE AMBIGUOUS SYNTAX OF LUKE 1,54-55

Like other examples of Semitic-style poetry, the Magnificat (Luke 1,46b-55) is characterized by a “terse” or “compact” syntax that eschews overt indications of syntactic relationship <sup>3</sup>. Nowhere does this terseness frustrate a meaningful analysis of the hymn more than in its final two couplets (vv. 54-55). The difficulties in this section can be largely reduced to a single question: which of the final two verbs in the hymn — μνησθῆναι in v. 54b, or ἐλάλησεν in v. 55a — do the elements of v. 55b modify? If the former verb, the elements of vv. 54b and 55b would represent a single, complete clause interrupted by v. 55a as a parenthetical statement (so *RV*, *NEB*, and *NIV*) <sup>4</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Analyzing μνησθῆναι as an infinitive of purpose.

<sup>2</sup> I have introduced a pronoun here for the sake of intelligibility, assimilating the text to Luke 1,50: καὶ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ εἰς γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν.

<sup>3</sup> The hymn, for instance, limits adjuncts and avoids the relative pronoun, departing from Luke’s practice of limiting “Mark’s monotonous parataxis with hypotaxis” (F. BOVON, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1 – 9:50* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 2002] 63). For a general introduction to “terseness” in biblical poetry, see J.L. KUGEL, *Idea of Biblical Poetry*. Parallelism and Its History (New Haven, CT 1981) 71, 87-92.

<sup>4</sup> So U. MITTMANN-RICHTER, *Magnifikat und Benediktus*. Die ältesten Zeugnisse der judenchristlichen Tradition von der Geburt des Messias (WUNT II/90; Tübingen 1996) 16; J.T. CARROLL, *Luke: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville, KY 2012) 48; H. KLEIN, *Das Lukas-evangelium* (KEK I.3; Göttingen 2006) 105, 114-115; D.L. BOCK, *Luke* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1994) I, 159-160; L.T. JOHNSON, *The Gospel of Luke* (SacPag 3; Collegeville, MN 1991) 40, 42; J. NOLLAND, *Luke 1–9:20* (WBC 35A; Dallas, TX 1990) 69; W. HENDRICKSEN, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke* (NTC 3; Grand Rapids, MI 1980) 113; I.H. MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI 1978) 85.

*Option 1*

He has helped his servant Israel,  
[to remember [his] Mercy...  
 (—as he spoke to our fathers—)  
...to Abraham and to his seed forever.]

If, on the other hand, v. 55b modifies ἐλάλησεν, it would form part of a single clause encompassing the final two cola of the hymn (v. 55a.b) <sup>5</sup>:

*Option 2*

He has helped his servant Israel,  
 to remember [his] Mercy,  
 [As he spoke to our fathers,  
[that is,] to Abraham and to his seed forever.]

Agreeing with Raymond Brown that “a parenthetical clause seems out of place in the relatively simple parallelism of the hymn”, I have defended the second reading in a previous article <sup>6</sup>. As I see it, the decisive evidence for the second reading is the significant semantic overlap between the phrases πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν (v. 55a) and τῷ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ (v. 55b), despite their alternation of πρὸς + accusative and bare dative forms. This overlap strongly suggests that the two phrases are coreferential and appositional, and should be analyzed as constituents of the same verb phrase <sup>7</sup>. In the same article, I also anchored the peculiar alternation of πρὸς + accusative and bare dative forms between these noun phrases in the Semitic poetic device of reverse ballast prepositions. In that device, the first colon of a parallelism employs a “heavier” alternative to, or variant of, a preposition found in the second colon (in this case, the lengthier πρὸς + accusative construction rather than a bare dative form). In turn, the second colon takes additional elements to compensate for the brevity of its own variant. In v. 55, these additional elements

<sup>5</sup> So R.E. BROWN, *The Birth of the Messiah* (New York <sup>2</sup>1993) 338; J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB 28; Garden City, NY 1981) 116; E. KLOSTERMANN, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HNT 5; Tübingen <sup>3</sup>1975) 21; J. REILING – J.L. SWELLENGREBEL, *A Translator's Handbook on the Gospel of Luke* (Leiden 1971) 79; J.M. CREED, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London 1930) 24.

<sup>6</sup> H. MÉNDEZ, “Semitic Poetic Techniques in the Magnificat: Luke 1:46-47, 55”, *JBL* 135 (2016) 557-574; cf. BROWN, *Birth of the Messiah*, 338.

<sup>7</sup> That overlap excludes attempts to introduce semantic nuances between the two phrases, as in: M. ZERWICK, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples* (Rome 1963) §55; P. JOÜON, “Notes de philologie évangélique: Luc 1.54-55. Une difficulté grammaticale du Magnificat”, *RSR* 15 (1925) 440-441.

would include the coordinate conjunction and determiner phrase, καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, and the line-final, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα<sup>8</sup>.

Although these considerations go far in supporting the second analysis of vv. 54-55, they do not resolve all of its perceived difficulties. Among these, the most significant is the perceived incoherence of the resulting expression, “he spoke... forever” (ἐλάλησεν [...] εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). Darrell Bock dismisses the second analysis of vv. 54-55 precisely on the grounds that “the idea... of God speaking *forever*”, that is, unendingly, “is awkward”<sup>9</sup>. I. Howard Marshall, in very similar terms, argues that “the first reading is best since otherwise εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is awkwardly placed”<sup>10</sup>.

The opacity of the expression is so pronounced that most recent defenders of the second analysis choose not to develop a coherent interpretation of it, but instead excise the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα from the syntactic structure of its host line. Heinz Schürmann and Wilfried Eckey, for instance, construe all elements of v. 55 with ἐλάλησεν except for the final εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, which he connects to the μνησθῆναι two lines earlier<sup>11</sup>. The dismemberment of v. 55b across the two nearest verb phrases is particularly jarring, especially as it disrupts the aforementioned “simple parallelism of the hymn”:

### Option 2b

He has helped his servant Israel,  
[to remember [his] Mercy...  
(—As he spoke to our fathers,  
[that is,] to Abraham and to his seed—)  
...forever.]

An even more radical solution appears in the two most recent English-language monographs dedicated to the Lukan infancy hymns, both of which deny that the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is structurally integrated within the host section of the hymn at any level of sentence representation. In the first, Stephen Farris argues that the phrase “should not be attached too

<sup>8</sup> H. MÉNDEZ, “Semitic Poetic Techniques in the Magnificat”, 565.

<sup>9</sup> BOCK, *Luke*, I, 160.

<sup>10</sup> MARSHALL, *Gospel of Luke*, 85; so also HENDRICKSEN, *Gospel According to Luke*, 113.

<sup>11</sup> H. SCHÜRMANN, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HThK 3; Freiburg 1982) I, 72, 77, nn. 252-253; W. ECKEY, *Das Lukasevangelium*. Unter Berücksichtigung seiner Parallelen (Neukirchen-Vluyn 2004) I, 98. In this solution, the clause, καθὼς ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν, / τῷ Ἀβραάμ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, forms a parenthesis within the larger structure of vv. 54-55, as in the Geneva Bible (1587): “(As hee hath spoken to our fathers, to wit, to Abraham, and his seede) for euer”.



closely to any preceding part of speech”, but fulfills two vital functions independently of any sentence hierarchy: “it states that the present salvation is not ephemeral but will last for all time and it marks the end of the psalm”<sup>12</sup>. Richard Dillon’s recent narratological-rhetorical analysis of the Magnificat, in turn, divests the phrase of any connection with the material preceding it, speaking of its “afterthought positioning” as “a standard conclusion, looking to eternity”<sup>13</sup>.

The suggestion that Luke has left an entire phrase in an “awkward” or “afterthought positioning” at the end of the Magnificat — whether as its poet or final redactor — raises critical questions about his use of sources and compositional technique. It is also difficult to square with recent, positive evaluations of the poetic sophistication of the infancy hymns, being more in line with older treatments that characterize the passages as a “mere pastiche of OT fragments.... and not creations of considerable literary merit”, cobbling together the genre’s stylistic and thematic *topoi* in a derivative presentation<sup>14</sup>. No doubt, the Magnificat’s poet might have been familiar with various examples of biblical poetry that find an elegant dénouement in an expression like εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, and may have wished to incorporate this “standard conclusion” into the composition. Nevertheless, in each of these examples — examples no less characterized by a terse or compact syntax than the present composition — the formula in question is tightly integrated into an analyzable sentence structure. There is every reason to believe that even a poet constrained by the terse syntax of the genre would develop a structurally and semantically coherent thought in v. 55 along similar lines:

LXX Ps 17,51

And showing mercy to his anointed one,  
to David and to his seed for ever [ἕως αἰῶνος].

LXX Ps 44,18.

Your name will be remembered in all generations,  
Therefore, the people will praise you,  
Forever and forever and ever. [εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα  
τοῦ αἰῶνος].

<sup>12</sup> S. FARRIS, *The Hymns of Luke’s Infancy Narratives* (JSNTSup 9; Sheffield 1985) 126.

<sup>13</sup> R.J. DILLON, *The Hymns of Saint Luke* (CBQMS 50; Washington, D.C. 2013) 37.

<sup>14</sup> FARRIS, *Hymns*, 113. Consider, for instance: “To suggest that Luke wrote these is not to posit any very exalted skill on his part [...] they are so packed with the Old Testament references as to be collages or mosaic of scriptural texts” (J. DRURY, *Tradition and Design in Luke’s Gospel. A Study in Early Christian Historiography* [Atlanta 1976] 49-50). Recent endorsements of the literary artistry of the hymns include: R.C. TANNEHILL, “The Magnificat as Poem”, *JBL* 93 (1974) 263-275; DILLON, *Hymns of Saint Luke*, 5, 155-156.

LXX Ps 47,14b-15

That you may tell the next generation that this is God,  
our God forever and forever and ever,  
He will guide us forever [εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας].

As far as I have seen, the only attempt in the last half-century to develop a coherent interpretation of v. 55 as a single clause appears in a footnote to Robert Tannehill's discussion of "The Magnificat as Poem". The footnote suggests in passing that the core expression, "he spoke... forever", may refer "not to the length of the speaking but to the length of time for which the spoken promise is valid"<sup>15</sup>. Unfortunately, Tannehill produces neither contextual evidence to defend this interpretation nor, more importantly, examples of the expression in parallel texts that could index it as an intelligible idiom. In this paper, I will provide that missing defense and elaboration, isolating up to three parallels for the expression in texts of the Second Temple period originally composed in Hebrew. Strikingly, two of these examples appear in the *Psalms of Solomon*, a poetic corpus long noted for its lexical and formal similarities with the Lukan infancy hymns<sup>16</sup>. A comprehensive description of these parallels will demonstrate that the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in v. 55b lays stress on the unending binding force and validity of the spoken promise "to Abraham and to his seed", a promise animating the principles of divine action outlined in vv. 51-53. Far from sitting detached at the end of the hymn, then, the phrase fulfills a crucial structural and rhetorical function in its current position, reinforcing the hymn's strophic divisions, and giving shape to its theology of covenant and salvation.

## II. PARALLELS TO THE SYNTAX OF LUKE 1,55

### 1. *Pss. Sol. 11,7*

The closest approximate to the expression, "he spoke... forever", in Luke 1,55 appears in the Greek version of *Pss. Sol. 11,7*, a hymn with significant parallels to *I Bar. 4,36 – 5,9*<sup>17</sup>:

<sup>15</sup> TANNEHILL, "Magnificat as Poem", 271, n. 19.

<sup>16</sup> An extensive catalogue of these similarities appears in BOVON, *Luke 1*, 56–57.

<sup>17</sup> For the possible literary dependence of these texts, see: C.A. MOORE, "Towards the Dating of the Book of Baruch", *CBQ* 36 (1974) 317–319; K. ATKINSON, *An Intertextual Study of the Psalms of Solomon* (Lewiston, NY 2001) 228–229. Since this particular hymn lacks clear historical allusions, it cannot be dated with certainty, though a first century BCE date is likely (K. ATKINSON, *I Cried to the Lord. A Study of the Psalms of Solomon's Historical Background and Social Setting* [Leiden 2004] 198–199).

Ἐνδυσαι, Ἱερουσαλημ, τὰ ἱμάτια τῆς δόξης σου,  
 ἐτοιμασον τὴν στολὴν τοῦ ἁγιάσματος σου,  
 ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐλάλησεν ἀγαθὰ Ἰσραηλ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι.

Put on, O Jerusalem, thy glorious garments;  
 Prepare the robe of your sanctity,  
 For God has spoken good [to] Israel for ever and ever.

Like its counterpart in Luke 1,55a, the verb ἐλάλησεν in *Pss. Sol.* 11,7a takes the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα as an adjunct. The verb also governs the indeclinable Ἰσραηλ, for which we can infer the dative case. In his translation of *Pss. Sol.* 11,7c, G. Buchanan Gray interprets Ἰσραηλ as a dative of reference, translating the entire line: “for God hath spoken and good concerning Israel for ever and ever”<sup>18</sup>. In its favor, this translation suits Num 10,29, a possible model for this text: “for the Lord has spoken good things concerning Israel” (where “concerning Israel” translates עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל; LXX, περὶ Ἰσραηλ). In the present hymn, however, a similar semantic sense is captured only two lines later with a ἐπί + dative construction: “may the Lord do what he has spoken concerning Israel and Jerusalem” (ποιῆσαι κύριος ἃ ἐλάλησεν ἐπὶ Ἰσραηλ καὶ Ἱερουσαλημ, *Pss. Sol.* 11,8b). It is possible, then, that the bare dative Ἰσραηλ in *Pss. Sol.* 11,7 represents a dative object of address, thus aligning this text more closely with Luke 1,55 instead.

Two distinctive elements of this text vis-à-vis Luke 1,55 should also be noted, though neither should significantly affect our interpretation of the adjunct, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. First, in the above example, the verb ἐλάλησεν takes an optional argument as a theme. That argument, ἀγαθὰ, is familiar from biblical usage (cf. ἐλάλησεν ἀγαθὰ in LXX 4 Kgdms 25,28; 1 Kgdms 25,30). Secondly, a concluding καὶ ἔτι intensifies the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, in a way consistent with the phraseology of this particular hymn (cf. v. 9).

The meaning of *Pss. Sol.* 11,7 is fairly transparent. Drawing on the language of Isa 52,1; 61,10 (cf. *1 Bar.* 5,1-2), the first two coda summon a personified Jerusalem, previously humiliated, to vest in garments befitting her newly sanctified and exalted state (11,7a.b). The final colon, in turn, links this summons to the “good” God who has spoken to or

<sup>18</sup> G.G. BUCHANAN, “Psalms of Solomon”, *The Apocrypha and Pseudopigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (ed. R.H. CHARLES) (Oxford 1913) II, 625-652. Similar translations appear in: R.B. WRIGHT, “Psalms of Solomon”, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (New York 1983) II, 662; ATKINSON, *Cried to the Lord*, 197; and the recent *NETS* translation. Another contemporary translation, the *LES*, analyses “Ἰσραηλ” in *Pss. Sol.* 11,7 as a dative of advantage: “God has spoken good things for Israel”.

concerning "Israel" (11,7c). In this instance, as Bovon writes, speaking carries "the Semitic nuance of 'promise'" <sup>19</sup>. Because "this good" has been spoken "for ever", Jerusalem, formerly emptied of her children (cf. 11,1-6), at last finds restoration. Here, the adverbial εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα indicates the length of time through which the "good" spoken upon Israel will extend, communicating the idea that the promise of divine kindness transcends the length of Israel's humiliation.

This analysis of the verse is confirmed in the two verses immediately following:

ποιῆσαι κύριος ἃ ἐλάλησεν ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ,  
ἀναστήσαι κύριος τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐν ὀνόματι δόξης αὐτοῦ,  
τοῦ κυρίου τὸ ἔλεος ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι.

May the Lord do what he has spoken concerning Israel and Jerusalem,  
May the Lord raise up Israel by his glorious name.

The mercy of the Lord is upon Israel forever and ever. (*Pss. Sol.* 11,8b-9)

The petition that the Lord "do what he has spoken concerning Israel and Jerusalem", that is, the "good" of the preceding line (v. 7), is realized in part through the extension of divine mercy "upon Israel forever and ever" (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι, v. 9). The ideas contained in vv. 7 and 9 are bound by the linguistic parallels between the two texts.

## 2. *Pss. Sol.* 17,4

If, following Bovon, we interpret the verb ἐλάλησεν in Luke 1,54-55 as a Semitic expression with the sense of "to promise" or "to swear", a second parallel to the language of Luke 1,54-55 obtains in the opening section of *Pss. Sol.* 17 <sup>20</sup>. That hymn, composed immediately prior to 63 B.C.E, condemns the Hasmoneans for establishing a non-Davidic monarchy in place of the Davidic dynasty established by God "for ever" (Ps 89,4; 2 Sam 7,16) <sup>21</sup>. In its extant Greek translation, the fourth verse describes the permanent establishment of the David dynasty through the syntagm: ὁμνυμι + dative (object of address) + [...] + εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα:

Σύ, κύριε, ἡρετίσω τὸν Δαυιδ βασιλέα ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ,  
καὶ σὺ ὁμοσας αὐτῷ περὶ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα <sup>22</sup>,  
τοῦ μὴ ἐκλείπειν ἀπέναντί σου βασίλειον αὐτοῦ.

<sup>19</sup> So BOVON, *Luke 1*, 57, citing this nuance as a parallel between the *Pss. Sol.* and the Magnificat.

<sup>20</sup> BOVON, *Luke 1*, 63; cf. 57.

<sup>21</sup> ATKINSON, *Cried to the Lord*, 135-144.

<sup>22</sup> The Syriac version, which depends on the Greek, omits εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

You, O Lord, selected David king over Israel,  
 And you swore to him concerning his seed for ever,  
 That his king would never fail you before him. (*Pss. Sol.* 17,4)

In his translation, Robert B. Wright analyzes the Hebrew form underlying εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in the second line as an adnominal rather than an adverbial element, dynamically rendering the entire line: “and you promised him that his descendants would continue for ever” for a more literal, “and you swore to him concerning his eternal seed”<sup>23</sup>. This analysis, though theoretically possible, is unlikely. Like the string τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ ἕως αἰῶνος in LXX Ps 17,51 (cf. MT Ps 18,51), the string περὶ τοῦ σπέρματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in *Pss. Sol.* 17,4 almost certainly translates Hebr. \*וְלִזְרֹעוֹ עַד-עוֹלָם, or a near equivalent like \*לְעוֹלָם. The Masoretic pointing of the Hebrew expression underlying LXX Ps 17,51, however, introduces prosodic breaks before עַד-עוֹלָם, indicating that the expression was traditionally analyzed as adverbial. The corresponding Hebrew expression underlying the εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα of *Pss. Sol.* 17,4, then, should also be understood as an adjunct to the verb, rather than to the noun phrase immediately preceding it. The same analysis also holds for τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in Luke 1,55.

The sense of the broader triplet also militates against an adnominal reading. Certainly, one could draw a contrast between the Davidic line, which will “never fail” to have a king, and the Hasmonean line, whose “offspring” God will completely “remove [...] from the earth” (vv. 4c.7-9). The emphasis in v. 4b, however, is not so much on the endurance of the Davidic line as on the perpetual force of the divine oath to David through Nathan in 2 Sam 7,16: “Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever”. By their claims to kingly authority, the Hasmoneans act as if this divine oath to David has lapsed (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17,5). By construing ὄμοσας with εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, however, the poet insists on the oath’s continuing validity. What God swore to David — that he would never fail to have a descendent upon his throne — he swore in an irrevocable and perpetually binding manner (cf. Ps 132,11).

The phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα also establishes an important verbal link to the opening verse of the hymn: “Lord, you are our king for ever” (κύριε σύ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, v. 1). By taking up the phrase used to introduce the hymn, v. 4 anchors the authority of the divine oath in God’s own eternal authority over Israel. Precisely as “king... for ever”,

<sup>23</sup> R.B. WRIGHT, *The Psalms of Solomon. A Critical Edition of the Greek Text* (London – New York 2007), 179.

God has the authority to permanently allot the earthly governance of Israel to the descendants of David.

### 3. *Jubilees* 37,18

A final parallel appears in a section of *Jubilees* preserved in its entirety in the Ethiopic, but only partially preserved in the Qumranic Hebrew version (4Q223-224, unit 2 iv,4). The Ethiopic depends upon a lost Greek translation of the original Hebrew<sup>24</sup>. In that text, Jacob confronts Esau on the battlefield, accusing him of violating an oath made to Isaac, his father (37,17). The terms of that oath are described in the preceding chapter:

"Now I will make you swear with the great oath... [that] each loves his brother kindly and properly. One is not to desire what is bad for his brother now and forever, throughout your entire lifetime, so that you may be prosperous in everything that you do and not be destroyed". (*Jub.* 36,7-8)

Against his brother's accusation, Esau gruffly retorts:

"Neither the children of men nor the beasts of the earth have any oath of righteousness which they have surely sworn forever. But every day they seek evil, one against the other, and each one [seeks] to kill his enemy and adversary.

And you will hate me and my sons forever. And so there is no observing of fraternity with you". (*Jub.* 37,18-19).

James VanderKam renders the end of the first line: "which they, once they have sworn, have sworn (it as valid) forever"<sup>25</sup>. In his discussion, James Kugel briefly entertains the same translation, but, failing to make sense of the expression, he settles instead on the reading: "even though they may swear it forever" — a reading that imagines repeated, habitual affirmations of an oath<sup>26</sup>. A comparison of the text above with *Pss. Sol.* 17,4, however, supports the first analysis. In the passage quoted above, Esau absolves himself of guilt by insisting that no oath made by a human being is "trustworthy" as if it were "sworn [...] forever". By comparison with *Jub.* 36,8 (cf. 37,13), the act of swearing "forever" is clearly equivalent to the act of committing oneself to observe an oath "henceforth forever all the days". Other swearing formulae used in *Jubilees* enjoin obligations:

<sup>24</sup> For a full discussion of the extant versions of *Jubilees*, and their relationship to one another, see J. VANDERKAM, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (HSM 14; Missoula 1977) 103-198.

<sup>25</sup> J. VANDERKAM, *The Book of Jubilees. A Critical Text* (CSCO 511; Leuven 1989) 247.

<sup>26</sup> J.L. KUGEL, *A Walk through Jubilees. Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of its Creation* (JSJSup 156; Leiden 2012) 177.

“forever in [one’s] generations until the day of judgment” (*Jub.* 9,15). Similar vocabulary is applied to the covenant commitments made between God and humans, which are to be observed “continually” (6,11), “with no limit of days” (6,14), and “for eternal generations” (13,26; cf. 1,7; 24,10; 6,10-13). In the thought-world of *Jubilees*, the violation of such oaths is so heinous that they carry a penalty as enduring as the broken promise: “eternal reproach” and “eternal execration so that their judgment will always be renewed” (*Jub.* 36,9-11).

In defiance of these principles, however, Esau insists that he was never truly subject to the obligations of his oath, and can regard the oath as if it had lapsed. In his view, the only perpetually valid principle of human action to which he and his brother are bound is the universal principle that humans will “every day [...] seek [...] evil, how to kill one’s enemy and oppressor”, adding “you will hate me and my sons forever”. The phrases “every day” and “forever” in the text create conceptual, if not verbal, links to the text of the original oath taken by both brothers (cf. *Jub.* 36,8).

### III. INTERPRETING LUKE 1,54-55

The three parallels isolated so far — two of which occur in the genre of poetry — provide a plausible linguistic background for the expression, ἐλάλησεν [...] εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, in Luke 1,55. Specifically, these parallels suggest the Greek expression calques a late Hebrew idiom for oath-swearing, likely taking the expression, דבר עד-עולם\* or דבר לעולם\*. It is plausible that a Greek-speaking Luke was familiar with the idiom through examples of translated Greek circulating in the first century CE, to the extent that he was either able (1) to actively employ it in composition, or (2) to tolerate it in his sources for the infancy narrative. When the meaning of the idiom distilled in the above discussion is read into Luke 1,55, in turn, a coherent interpretation of the text emerges — one that reinforces the structural and thematic unity of the hymn’s second strophe (vv. 50-55), and supports a positive evaluation of the poet’s literary sophistication<sup>27</sup>.

The couplet immediately preceding v. 55 proclaims that God has come to the help of Israel in order to honor his commitment to his “Mercy” (v. 54), an apparent metonym for the term “covenant” (cf. LXX Ps 104,8

<sup>27</sup> This evaluation of the Magnificat as containing two principal divisions — vv. 46b-50 and vv. 51-55 — follows BOVON, *Luke 1*, 62. Bovon uses “half” rather than “strophe” for these divisions.



[MT Ps 105,8]; LXX Ps 110,5 [MT Ps 111,5])<sup>28</sup>. This idea is, in turn, echoed in v. 55, in keeping with the Semitic predilection for parallelisms of thought, even across couplets. On the one hand, v. 55 affirms God has intervened on behalf of Israel in keeping with the aforementioned covenant sworn to the "fathers", and in them, to their "seed" as well. A similar idea appears in Mic 7,20, long since recognized as a possible model for v. 55: "You will show faithfulness to Jacob, / and steadfast love to Abraham, / as you swore to our fathers / from days of old"<sup>29</sup>. In the concluding phrase, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, however, the hymn also lays stress on the one feature of this covenant that makes it relevant to even later generations of Abraham's descendants, namely, its "everlasting" character. That "everlasting" quality is a point of special stress in the Priestly account of the covenant's institution: "I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you [...] all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding" (Gen 17,7-8).

Read in this light, v. 55 takes up the opening thesis of the hymn's second strophe, namely, that God's fidelity to "those who fear him" endures for all time, as illustrated in certain principles of divine action true in every "generation"<sup>30</sup>:

His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He shows strength with his arm;  
he scatters the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
He brings down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifts up the lowly;  
He fills the hungry with good things,  
and sends the rich away empty. (Luke 1,50-53)

The aorist verbs concentrated in this section of the hymn are best analyzed as "gnomic" aorists, which index "universal occurrences" of an event and regularly appear with "features of proverbial statement, such as nouns with generic articles, indefinite noun or pronoun reference"<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> A semantic overlap between "mercy" and "covenant" is clear in the Benedictus (Luke 1,72) and in Deut 7,12; 29,20; LXX 3 Kgdms 8,23; 2 Chr 6,14; Ps 88,29; *Esd.B.* 11,5; 19,32; *Odes* 13,72. In the Benedictus, the covenant is cast as a divine promise of deliverance (Luke 1,74-75).

<sup>29</sup> So MITTMANN-RICHERT, *Magnifikat und Benediktus*, 16; MARSHALL, *Gospel of Luke*, 85; FITZMYER *Luke*, I, 368.

<sup>30</sup> "The 'forever' picks up the 'generation after generation' in 1:50" (JOHNSON, *Gospel of Luke*, 42).

<sup>31</sup> B.M. FANNING, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* (Oxford 1990) 266.

Several studies attest a “gnomic” sense for certain perfects in the Hebrew Bible, including the five perfects rendered as aorists in the Old Greek of the Song of Hannah, which no doubt inspires this section of the Magnificat <sup>32</sup>:

1 Sam 2,4-5 (LXX 1 Kgdms 2,4-5)

The bows of the mighty languish <sup>33</sup>,

But the weak have themselves [περιεζώσαντο] with strength.

Those who were full of bread are brought low [ἡλαττώθησαν],

But the hungry have forsaken [παρήκαν] the land.

For the barren has given birth to [ἔτεκεν] seven,

But she who has abounded in children languishes [ἡθένησεν].

The thematic unity of the strophe is, in turn, reinforced by the enveloping repetition of the term “mercy” (ἐλέους) at vv. 50 and 54, bringing the second section of the hymn to a harmonious dénouement <sup>34</sup>.

An appreciation of the phrase’s function within its surrounding syntax allows us to correct elements in the interpretations of the text that are developed apart from an appreciation for the construal of εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα with ἐλάλησεν. As noted earlier, Farris claims that the inclusion of εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα at the end of the hymn indicates that the divine intervention celebrated in the first strophe of the hymn (vv. 46b-49) “is not ephemeral but will last for all time”. This analysis suits Farris’ interpretation of the “present salvation” as the coming of Jesus Christ, an “eschatological” reality <sup>35</sup>. Nevertheless, an analysis of vv. 54-55 sensitive to the verbal government of εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα supports a different conclusion. It is the covenant relationship between God and Israel — and not the particular divine intervention occasioning the hymn — that lasts “forever”. If that divine intervention itself has an enduring quality, it is so only because it climactically fulfills God’s eternal commitment to “Abraham and his seed”.

<sup>32</sup> On the relationship between the aorists in vv. 51-53 and 1 Sam 2,4-5 (LXX 1 Kgdms 2,4-5), see FANNING, *Verbal Aspect*, 268-269. On the characterization of the aorists in the Song of Hannah as “gnomic”, see: BDF § 333.2, ZERWICK, *Biblical Greek*, § 259. The existence of a “gnomic perfect” in Biblical Hebrew is discussed in C. VAN DER MERWE – J. NAUDE – J. KROEZE, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (BLH 3; Sheffield 1999) 146. Ugaritic, Aramaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic also attest a gnomic perfect, while Akkadian attests a gnomic preterite (see bibliography in M. ROGLAND, *Alleged Non-Past Uses of Qatal in Classical Hebrew* [SSN 44; Assen 2003] 19, nn. 24-28).

<sup>33</sup> This verb is aorist active third person singular, but it reflects the implied verb of a Hebrew nominal sentence, not a Hebrew perfect.

<sup>34</sup> These observations exclude Ramarason’s evaluation of vv. 50-53 and vv. 54-55 as separate strophes: L. RAMARASON, “Ad structuram cantici ‘Magnificat’”, *Verbum Domini* 46 (1968) 34.

<sup>35</sup> FARRIS, *Hymns*, 126. Farris’ “eschatological” understanding of the deliverance occasioning the hymn appears on p. 115.

By the same token, both Farris and Dillon fail to appreciate the focus of the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα when they suggest that it primarily indexes a future time radiating from the narrative present of Luke 1,46-55. Farris, again, claims the phrase introduces the notion that the “the present salvation [...] will last for all time”. Similarly, Dillon reads the phrase proleptically, as “a standard conclusion looking to eternity”<sup>36</sup>. What these analyses fail to appreciate is that the εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα radiates not from “the present salvation”, but from a past moment in time — the establishment of the covenant with Abraham. In v. 55, the mask of the hymn, the “hand-maiden” of v. 54, credits the climactic intervention occasioning her praise to a divine oath made to “our fathers” and valid “from generation to generation” on through to her own (vv. 50, 54). By coming to the help of “his servant Israel”, God has reaffirmed the enduring validity of that oath, precisely as an oath spoken “forever”.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Department of Religious Studies  
Chapel Hill, NC 27759  
U.S.A.

Hugo MÉNDEZ

#### SUMMARY

This article isolates three parallels to the expression, “he spoke... forever” (Luke 1,55) in translations of the *Psalms of Solomon* and *Jubilees*. These parallels suggest that Luke 1,55 calques a Hebrew idiom for oath-swearing, likely known to Luke from Greek translations in his sources. Read in light of these parallels, Luke 1,55 fulfills a crucial structural and rhetorical function in its climactic position in the Magnificat, reinforcing the unity of the hymn’s second strophe (vv. 50-55), and giving shape to its theology of covenant and salvation.

<sup>36</sup> DILLON, *Hymns of Saint Luke*, 37.

## EL “SEGUNDO SIGNO” EN EL CUARTO EVANGELIO

¿Cómo se puede determinar la unidad del “segundo signo” en el Cuarto Evangelio?, ¿cuáles son los criterios metodológicos para determinar su “unidad de acción”? La exégesis reciente de Jn 4,46-54 ha puesto en cuestión tanto los límites de la narración como su unidad interna. Para comenzar mencionemos sólo dos ejemplos: J. Smit Sibinga retomó las dificultades textuales producidas por los espacios en el v. 46a-b y buscó resolver las dificultades de delimitación del relato <sup>1</sup>. Con un enfoque metodológico muy diferente C.H. Giblin intentó recuperar y precisar el modelo (*pattern*) narrativo que da cuenta de la unidad del pasaje <sup>2</sup>. Si bien muchos de estos estudiosos han dedicado sus esfuerzos a definir los límites del relato y su unidad narrativa, sus resultados, sin embargo, siguen mostrando discrepancias. De hecho, aunque varios autores han establecido la trama narrativa (*plot*) como criterio de interpretación del Cuarto Evangelio <sup>3</sup>, muy pocos estudios del “segundo signo” reflejan este tipo de enfoque metodológico <sup>4</sup>.

El hallazgo más importante de nuestro estudio consiste en demostrar el “doble desenlace narrativo” de Jn 4,46-54. El “segundo signo” no consiste solo en la “peripecia” (περιπέτεια) de una curación, como se podría deducir de la información del narrador en el v. 51: “su hijo vive”, sino en la “agnición” (ἀναγνώρισις), o re-conocimiento de una nueva situación,

<sup>1</sup> J. SMIT SIBINGA, “The Shape of a Miracle Story: A Respectful Analysis of John 4:43-54”, *NT* 45 (2003) 222-236.

<sup>2</sup> C.H. GIBLIN, “Suggestion, Negative Response, and Positive Action in St. John’s Portrayal of Jesus: (John 2:1-11; 4:46-54; 7:2-14; 11:1-44)”, *NTS* 26 (1980) 197-211, quien desarrolla y refina las propuestas hechas por R.K. BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (KEK; Göttingen <sup>10</sup>1978) 150-154.

<sup>3</sup> Segovia ofrece, por ejemplo, una interpretación retórica literaria del cuarto evangelio. Él considera que el motivo del viaje unifica su trama narrativa (*plot*). F. SEGOVIA, “The Journey(s) of the Word of God: A Reading of the Plot of the Fourth Gospel”, *The Fourth Gospel from a Literary Perspective* (eds. R.A. CULPEPPER – F. SEGOVIA) (Semeia 53; Atlanta, GA 1991) 23-54.

<sup>4</sup> Entre los pocos estudios narrativos del “Segundo Signo” se deben contar los siguientes dedicados a los “personajes menores” (el oficial real, su hijo y sus sirvientes) y recogidos en la obra reciente *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel: Narrative Approaches to Seventy Figures in John* (eds. S.A. HUNT – D.F. TOLMIE – R. ZIMMERMANN) (WUNT 1/314; Tübingen 2013). Véase P.J. JUDGE, “The Royal Official: Not so Officious”, 306-313; G. VAN BELLE – S.A. HUNT, “The Son of the Royal Official: Incarnating the Life Giving Power of Jesus’ Word”, 314-328; P.J. JUDGE, “The Slaves of the Royal Official: Servants of the Word”, 329-331.

confirmado por el narrador en el v. 53: “el padre entendió (ἐγνώ), entonces, que en aquella hora Jesús le había dicho: ‘tu hijo vive’”. La formulación de una “doble resolución” muestra una destreza narrativa sin igual por parte del evangelista, habilidad que se corrobora en otros relatos de su evangelio y que define gran parte de su teología. Nuestro estudio mostrará, a continuación, que el enfoque narrativo ofrece claves de interpretación adecuadas para entender la “unidad de acción” del “segundo signo”. Esta unidad no se apoya sobre el hecho contado, sino sobre la manera como se cuenta, para lo cual la comprensión de la conjunción entre peripecia y agnición en nuestro relato es indispensable <sup>5</sup>.

### I. EL DOBLE DESENLAZCO NARRATIVO

D. Marguerat señaló hace algún tiempo el regreso a la dimensión narrativa del cuarto evangelio <sup>6</sup>. El análisis que se presenta a continuación busca, en efecto, profundizar en esta dimensión narrativa. La primera pregunta concierne la unidad del relato: ¿por qué éste no termina en Jn 4,50 con la primera noticia de la fe del oficial en la palabra de Jesús o con la verificación del cumplimiento de esta palabra por parte de los siervos en el v. 51?, ¿cuáles son las líneas narrativas que determinan en este caso la unidad de acción de la narración?

El marco narrativo (Jn 4,46.54) de la curación del hijo del βασιλικός subraya su ubicación geográfica (Γαλιλαία). A ella le sigue la descripción de la situación inicial y sobre todo la presentación del problema que desencadena la trama del relato: el hijo está a punto de morir (ἤμελλεν γὰρ ἀποθνήσκειν) (v. 47). La tensión dramática, o complicación de la narración, crece hasta llegar a la segunda petición del oficial, en forma de súplica, dirigida a Jesús (κύριε, κατέβηθι πρὶν ἀποθανεῖν τὸ παιδίον μου). ¿Por qué se puede hablar de una tensión dramática aquí? Porque el lector, que no ha sido informado de cómo termina la historia, ni conoce las razones del reproche de Jesús, se pregunta si la petición del oficial será tenida en cuenta. El “lector implícito” sólo sabe del impasse en el cual se

<sup>5</sup> Es importante recordar que Aristóteles consideraba la agnición más perfecta aquella que iba acompañada de la peripecia. ARISTÓTELES, *Poética*, 1452a. 30-33. Véase V. GARCÍA YEBRA, *Poética de Aristóteles*. Edición Trilingüe (Biblioteca Románica Hispánica; Madrid 1974) 164.

<sup>6</sup> D. MARGUERAT, *La Bible en récits. L'exégèse biblique à l'heure du lecteur* (MoBi 48; Genève 2003) 27. Regreso que ya había sido prefigurado por J. BECKER, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, 2 vols. (ÖTBK 4; Gütersloh 1979-1981), y desarrollado por R.A. CULPEPPER, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Foundations and Facets. New Testament; Philadelphia 1983).

encuentran los dos protagonistas. La dificultad parece resolverse rápidamente: Jesús le dice: “vete, tu hijo vive” (v. 50a). El relato, sin embargo, no tiene un desenlace simple; al contrario, este parece dilatarse en varios momentos. Después del diálogo entre Jesús y el oficial (vv. 48-50a) el narrador informa de la fe del oficial (ἐπίστευσεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῷ λόγῳ [...] καὶ ἐπορεύετο) (v. 50b), pero *no* de la curación del hijo. La tensión dramática prolongada hábilmente por el evangelista se resuelve parcialmente con la noticia de los siervos: “tu hijo vive” (v. 51). A esta peripecia o cambio en la situación inicial (el hijo que estaba a punto de morir) le sigue una resolución ulterior descrita como una agnición: el padre reconoce que su hijo vive. Sin embargo esta ἀναγνώρισις no consiste simplemente en la verificación de una curación, sino en la comprensión de que en aquella hora, la misma en la cual Jesús le dijo “tu hijo vive”, tuvo lugar la curación. El desenlace del relato subraya, así, tanto el cambio del peligro de muerte del hijo (peripecia), como la modificación en el conocimiento del oficial (agnición) <sup>7</sup>.

El hallazgo del desenlace doble, una peripecia y una agnición, en el relato del “segundo signo” tiene varias consecuencias importantes para la interpretación de todo el pasaje. ¿Qué tipo de agnición se desarrolla aquí? (1) El evangelista no informa a su lector sólo del reconocimiento de una curación. La dilatación de la resolución, es decir, el tiempo o historia que transcurre entre el creer del hombre y su comprender la nueva situación de su hijo (Jn 4,52-53a), tiene como objetivo subrayar el tema de la hora. Primero él interroga cuándo (= qué hora) su hijo mejoró, después se le informa que la mejoría sucedió el día anterior en la hora séptima y por fin sucede el reconocimiento de la hora en que Jesús había pronunciado su palabra. El análisis del desenlace muestra que el evangelista utiliza la agnición como instrumento para exponer su teología de la “hora”. (2) La dilatación del desenlace muestra igualmente el desarrollo del tema de la fe. Entre el creer (ἐπίστευσεν) del hombre en la palabra de Jesús (v. 50b) y su creer (ἐπίστευσεν) junto al de su familia (v. 53b) se encuentra el reconocimiento de la hora de la curación. El “segundo creer”, el del oficial y su familia, no parece, así, la simple repetición del “primer creer”, sino la confirmación comunitaria de un reconocimiento individual. ¿Cómo se articula, en fin, la unidad del relato? (3) El hallazgo del desenlace doble muestra, además, que la unidad del relato no consiste en el hecho escueto de la curación del hijo del oficial. Esta unidad está determinada, más bien,

<sup>7</sup> En nuestro estudio, como se puede observar, la peripecia y la agnición corresponden respectivamente a los resultados de las tramas de resolución y de reconocimiento (*narrative plots*). La particularidad de nuestro relato, sin embargo, consiste en que este se articula como una trama unitaria y no como dos tramas sobrepuestas.

por los dos componentes de la historia: la curación y el reconocimiento de su hora. Son estos dos elementos que hacen del relato no solo una unidad narrativa, sino también un σημεῖον en sentido juaneo.

En el Cuarto Evangelio se pueden identificar otras narraciones donde peripecia y agnición se entrelazan; la curación del hijo del oficial no se puede considerar, en este sentido, un caso aislado. Veamos un ejemplo: el relato de la “multiplicación de los panes” (Jn 6,1-15) se resuelve y concluye de manera muy diferente a sus relatos paralelos en los sinópticos (Mt 14,13-21; 15,32-39; Mc 6,32-44; 8,1-10; Lc 9,10b-17). El desenlace narrativo en los evangelios sinópticos indica una peripecia o cambio en la situación inicial: en un lugar desierto, con muy poca comida para una multitud, “todos comieron y se saciaron, y se recogieron doce canastos de pedazos que sobraron” (Lc 9,17 // Mt 14,20). En Jn 6,12 el desenlace de la narración se dilata de nuevo, el narrador no parece detenerse sobre la satisfacción de la necesidad de la multitud, sino sobre sus efectos: “cuando se saciaron, dijo a sus discípulos: recojan los pedazos que sobraron, para que nada se pierda”. La noticia de la abundancia recogida (v. 13) conduce a una nueva resolución, en este caso se trata de la agnición de los hombres que ven el signo que Jesús ha realizado y lo declaran como el verdadero profeta que tenía que venir al mundo (v. 14). Al igual que en el relato del “segundo signo”, el Cuarto Evangelista utiliza la conjunción de la agnición y la peripecia para desarrollar algunos de sus temas teológicos preferidos: el “ver”, Jesús como “profeta de verdad”, el “mundo” como destinatario de su anuncio.

La conjunción entre peripecia y agnición se encuentra atestiguada igualmente en muchos textos bíblicos; no se trata de una técnica exclusiva del evangelio de Juan o de los sinópticos, sino de una destreza particular de algunos narradores bíblicos que descubrieron en ella un vehículo ideal para transmitir experiencias de sentido. La afirmación “tú eres ese hombre” (2 Sam 12,7) concluye hábilmente, por ejemplo, la parábola con la cual el profeta Natán denuncia la injusticia del rey David (vv. 1-13). La “fábula” del hombre rico y del hombre pobre no busca simplemente una peripecia, es decir, identificar un culpable, sino que logra el cambio en la conciencia de uno de los protagonistas <sup>8</sup>, es decir, de David. Curiosamente para el narrador del libro de Samuel el reconocimiento de la responsabilidad de David se expresa ante Dios, no ante Urías, su mujer o su familia. El rey admite ante Natán: “he pecado contra el Señor” (v. 13). El re-conocimiento en este caso no se limita a la conciencia de una falta:

<sup>8</sup> En este caso se podría hablar también de “lector ideal” de la narración, o que se desarrolla como parte de la escena, interno a la diégesis.



la falta de compasión con el débil (v. 6); sino a la comprensión de la predilección divina para con David y su respuesta incongruente ante ella (vv. 7.13).

La agnición más perfecta, según Aristóteles, es aquella acompañada de la peripecia. En una fábula simple el desarrollo de la acción es continuo y el cambio de situación (μετάβασις) sucede sin peripecia ni agnición (ἄνευ περιπατείας ἢ ἀναγνωρισμοῦ). En una fábula compleja, en cambio, la transición va acompañada de peripecia, de agnición o de ambas <sup>9</sup>. Estos cambios deberían corresponder naturalmente a la estructura de la fábula, es decir, deberían respetar la concatenación o unidad de los hechos <sup>10</sup>. Aristóteles ilustra la conjunción perfecta entre peripecia (el cambio de la acción en sentido contrario) y agnición (la modificación del conocimiento o re-conocimiento) mediante el ejemplo de Edipo. El mensajero que busca liberar a Edipo del temor con relación a su madre cambia la acción en sentido contrario (peripecia); Edipo cambia de la ignorancia al conocimiento (agnición), en este caso no para la amistad sino para el odio; no para la dicha, sino para el infortunio <sup>11</sup>.

Nuestro hallazgo más importante, a saber, el desenlace doble (peripecia y agnición) del relato de la curación del hijo del βασιλικός en Jn 4,46-54, se confirma por la presencia de un modelo narrativo similar en el Evangelio de Juan, en la Biblia y fuera de ella. La composición literaria del “segundo signo” refleja, en este sentido, una técnica narrativa conocida en la literatura antigua, tanto semita como helenística, que permite comprender mejor la profundidad del anuncio juaneo. Las consecuencias inmediatas más importantes para el diálogo con los estudiosos de este texto se pueden enunciar como sigue: (1) la unidad de la acción narrada en Jn 4,46-54 está determinada no sólo por la peripecia indicada, sino también por su agnición; (2) los elementos discontinuos de la narración se deben interpretar a la luz de la unidad de la acción; (3) la dilatación del desenlace narrativo en el “segundo signo”, es decir, la sucesión de la agnición a la peripecia, explica, en este caso, la presencia de diversos temas característicos, si no exclusivos, de la teología juanea. A continuación se enunciarán algunos de los resultados más importantes de este análisis para la historia de la interpretación del pasaje.

<sup>9</sup> ARISTÓTELES, *Poética*, 1452a. 15-17.

<sup>10</sup> Una fábula bien construida no comienza en cualquier punto y termina en otro cualquiera, sino que sigue ciertas reglas. Una norma es el límite de la magnitud; sin embargo, la unidad de la acción es una norma aún más importante que la anterior. ARISTÓTELES, *Poética*, 1450b. 32-34. La fábula consiste precisamente en la imitación de una acción, del todo de la acción. ARISTÓTELES, *Poética*, 1451a. 30-37.

<sup>11</sup> ARISTÓTELES, *Poética*, 1452a. 22-33.

## II. LA DELIMITACIÓN DEL “SEGUNDO SIGNO” EN EL CUARTO EVANGELIO

La delimitación de la narración del hijo del βασιλικός en Jn 4,46-54 presenta dos problemas de interpretación. En primer lugar, no es suficientemente claro dónde comienza el relato. En el códex Vaticanus no aparece ningún espacio que divida 4,46 en dos partes; mientras que en el códex Sinaiticus el relato se delimita mediante la variante textual *ην δε τις* y un espacio que lo diferencia de la noticia de la transformación del agua en vino en el v. 46a <sup>12</sup>. En segundo lugar, varios estudiosos se han preguntado cuál es la función de la narración, si ésta concluye la sección o da inicio a una nueva <sup>13</sup>.

1. *La historia breve de un καί*

J. Smit Sibinga ha intentado dar una explicación estructuralista a la delimitación de Jn 4,46 <sup>14</sup>. Karl Lachmann en sus ediciones de 1831 y 1842 habría sido el primero en usar la K mayúscula para delimitar el comienzo de la historia en el v. 46c. Westcott–Hort (1881) presenta un espacio notable antes del v. 43 y después del v. 54 (pero no divide el v. 46). Ebehard Nestle se apoyó sustancialmente sobre el texto de Westcott–Hort para la elaboración de su primera edición del *Novum Testamentum Graece* (1898); sin embargo, no incluyó ninguna *distinctio pericoparum* entre los vv. 42-43, ni después del v. 46c. Esta separación sólo se incluyó a partir de la décima edición (1914) de su trabajo <sup>15</sup>. Las ediciones más recientes (27/28) de Nestle–Aland conservan la distinción tipográfica del Καί en el v. 46c sugerida por Lachmann, diferenciando, de este modo, la noticia del desplazamiento hacia Caná (v. 46a-b) de la presentación del

<sup>12</sup> En el Codex Vaticanus los espacios largos entre palabras se encuentran en Jn 4,43 (antes de *μετα δε*); v. 45 (antes de *οτε ουν*) y v. 46 (antes de *ηλθεν ουν*), también en medio de la sección, en v. 50 (*λεγει αυτω*) (al igual que en el Sinaiticus) y al final del texto, es decir, entre v. 54 y 5,1. En el Codex Sinaiticus los espacios largos entre palabras se encuentran en el v. 46 (antes de la variante *ην δε τις*) y al comienzo del v. 48 (antes de *ειπεν ουν*).

<sup>13</sup> Un grupo de autores lee la narración con la sección anterior. U. SCHNELLE la denomina, por ejemplo, “Kana-Ringkomposition” (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes* [ThHK 4; Leipzig 1998] 94-96). Ya M.-J. LAGRANGE había señalado una *inclusio* en el mismo lugar (*Évangile selon Saint Jean* [EtB; Paris 1948] 123-124). Véase también, U. WILCKENS, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (NTD 4; Göttingen 1998) 89; R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HThK 4; Freiburg 1965) 500. Otro grupo de autores lee esta sección como introducción de la siguiente, por ejemplo, “Jesus as the Mediator of Life and Judgment 4:43–5:57” in G.R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John* (WBC 36; Waco, TX 1987) 66-81. Véase también, R. BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 149-150.

<sup>14</sup> J. SMIT SIBINGA, “The Shape of a Miracle Story”, 222-236.

<sup>15</sup> J. SMIT SIBINGA, “The Shape of a Miracle Story”, 222-224.

βασιλικός y su hijo enfermo (v. 46c). J. Smit Sibinga, al igual que Lachmann, considera que la sección comienza en el v. 46c apoyándose en la variante del Sinaiticus y del Claromontanus (ἦν δε) y sobre todo en su recuento silábico del texto.

J. Smit Sibinga afirma que el propósito de su estudio consiste en analizar la narrativa en su contexto mediante el recuento del número de sílabas del texto<sup>16</sup>. Su recuento, sin embargo, no está exento de dificultades. Para que el número de sílabas corresponda con ciertos números simbólicos, el autor discrimina, en primer lugar, algunas de las variantes textuales. Concluye que en Jn 4,51 se debe preferir la variante larga (que añade αὐτου a los siervos); no así en el caso del v. 53 (εἰν) donde Nestle–Aland (27/28) deja abierta la interpretación y donde J. Smit Sibinga prefiere la variante *ardua* o breve. En el v. 54 la omisión de la partícula δε podría generar una asíndeton, J. Smit Sibinga opta también en este caso por la versión breve del texto. Después de establecer las variantes que se deben preferir, el recuento final de los vv. 43-54 arroja el resultado “redondo” de 450 sílabas, que el autor compara y corrobora con el resultado del recuento silábico de Jn 2,13-25 y de Herodoto, *Historias*, 4:60-61<sup>17</sup>. Cuando realiza el recuento de la narración restringida a Jn 4,46c-54 la cifra es de 318 sílabas. El autor confirma la técnica matemática utilizada en el texto adecuando las proporciones de cada subsección a una “sección de oro” y mencionando el uso simbólico del número total (318) de sílabas en los vv. 46c-54<sup>18</sup>.

Los resultados más importantes del estudio de J. Smit Sibinga son los siguientes: (1) el recuento silábico confirma que la narración comienza en Jn 4,46c y no en el v. 46a<sup>19</sup>; (2) el centro físico de la narración determinado por el recuento silábico se ubica en el v. 50d: la palabra de Jesús en la cual cree el oficial y su reacción de obediencia. Estos resultados de

<sup>16</sup> J. SMIT SIBINGA, “The Shape of a Miracle Story”, 225.

<sup>17</sup> J. SMIT SIBINGA, “The Shape of a Miracle Story”, 225-229. J. Smit reconoce que debe parte de sus intuiciones metodológicas al estudio de M.J.J. MENKEN, *Numerical Literary Techniques in John* (NTS 55; Leiden 1985).

<sup>18</sup> “The proportions of this frame exhibit the golden section: 14 v. 46c and v. 54 use  $19 + 31 = 50$ s. (When asked to divide 100 according to the ‘golden section’, using (only) natural numbers, one finds the answer:  $62 + 38 = 100$ . So for 50 the approximation  $31 + 19$  is the best one can do in natural numbers)”. J. SMIT SIBINGA, “The Shape of a Miracle Story”, 229. Para el uso simbólico de 318 véase Barn. 9,8; ORÍGENES, *Comentario sobre el Evangelio de Juan*, 13,59.

<sup>19</sup> Véase también R.T. FORTNA: “In 46b we should perhaps follow the adequately attested reading ἦν δε (⌘ D it etc.), which fits the beginning of a story better than the variant καὶ ἦν, substituted in transmission as smoother after 46a”, *The Gospel of the Signs. A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel* (MSSNTS 11; Cambridge 1970) 39.

su análisis “respetuoso” del texto no respetan, sin embargo, o mejor, no tienen en cuenta, la unidad de acción narrada por el Cuarto Evangelista. Por una parte, el marco geográfico (Γαλιλαία) de la narración en el v. 46a conforma una inclusión importante con el v. 54<sup>20</sup>, donde se confirma, a manera de conclusión, el carácter de signo (σημεῖον) de la acción de Jesús. El procedimiento metodológico de J. Smit Sibinga recorta artificialmente el comienzo del relato desconociendo que para el Cuarto Evangelista la unidad de acción está determinada por el signo como un todo (peripecia y agnición) no sólo por la curación del hijo. En segundo lugar, su “centro temático”, es decir, la respuesta de fe del oficial a la palabra de Jesús (v. 50), excluye la agnición del lector del relato: el Cuarto Evangelista realiza un esfuerzo literario importante para mostrar que el reconocimiento de la “hora salvífica” determina la fe de los oyentes. Ignorar la agnición del relato para concentrar la atención en la obediencia del oficial significa, en fin, desconocer la importancia no sólo del tema de la hora, sino también el de la fe como signo comunitario. El recuento silábico constituye, de hecho, un criterio bastante pobre de estructuración de sentido en cuanto enfoca unívocamente la forma del relato sin tener en cuenta la unidad de su contenido.

## 2. El arco de “Caná a Caná”

¿Cuál es el mejor criterio literario para delimitar Jn 4,46-54?: ¿las repeticiones lexicales (v. gr. ἡμέρα) o un tema transversal (v. gr. πιστεύω)? ¿Cómo se explica la unidad de la sección (Juan 2-4)? ¿Se trata de una secuencia narrativa o de una secuencia temática<sup>21</sup>? Muchos estudiosos se han decantado por este segundo criterio. Para ellos la sección consiste en un “quiasmo sintético” (o concéntrico), articulado a partir de uno de los siguientes temas: la fe, los días, la des-materialización de la religión.

F.J. Moloney delimitó Jn 2,1 – 4,54 como una unidad temática coherente<sup>22</sup>. Su criterio de cohesión fue la fe, o más exactamente, el desplazamiento de una fe incorrecta o parcial de personajes judíos a una fe correcta o completa de personajes no-judíos. L. Kierspel reconstruyó

<sup>20</sup> El problema textual de Jn 4,46c se podría dirimir en este caso simplemente siguiendo la tipografía del Codex Vaticanus y editando el καὶ en minúscula.

<sup>21</sup> A propósito de la diferencia entre secuencia narrativa y secuencia temática, véase D. MARGUERAT – Y. BOURQUIN, *Per leggere i racconti biblici*. La Bibbia si racconta: iniziazione all’analisi narrativa (Roma 2011), 43-44.

<sup>22</sup> F.J. MOLONEY, “From Cana to Cana (John 2,1 – 4,54) and the Fourth Evangelist’s Concept of Correct (and Incorrect) Faith”, *Studia Biblica 2* (ed. E.A. LIVINGSTONE) (JSNTSupp. 2; Sheffield 1980) 185-213. Véase del mismo autor *Belief in the Word*. Reading the Fourth Gospel: John 1-4 (Minneapolis, MN 1993).

recientemente su hipótesis, es decir, el paralelismo sintético presente en Juan 2-4 y los itinerarios que van de la fe incompleta a la completa. Pero al mismo tiempo lo criticó severamente por su comprensión de estos “itinerarios paralelos” <sup>23</sup>: el muestra, por ejemplo, que la fe de María (2,1-11) no tiene correspondencia con la del oficial real (4,43-54). Kierspel puntualiza que la caracterización de los judíos en el relato de la purificación del templo (2,12-22) no se refiere explícitamente a su falta de fe. La definición de la fe de Nicodemo (3,1-21) como “fe parcial” no corresponde ni siquiera a la mitad del relato. La definición de la fe del bautista como “completa” está igualmente lejos de la evidencia que se encuentra en 3,22-26.

J.H. Bernard y M.-É. Boismard intentaron explicar la unidad de la sección a partir de las menciones repetidas de los “días” <sup>24</sup>. El Evangelista habría utilizado un esquema de una semana de siete días para describir el ministerio público de Jesús, que coincidiría de esta forma con una “nueva creación”. Orígenes ya había llamado la atención sobre la mención del tercer día (Jn 2,1). En efecto, dependiendo de cómo se computa el “tercer día” (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ) (v. 1) y las menciones del “día siguiente” (τῇ ἐπαύριον) (1,29.35.43), la “semana inicial” resulta de seis, siete o incluso de ocho días. L. Kierspel resume así las hipótesis es estos autores:

Día	Seis días	Siete días	Ocho días
1	1,19-18		
2	1,29-34	<i>idem</i>	<i>idem</i>
3	1,35-42		
4	1,43-51	1,40-42	1,40-42
5		1,43-51	1,43-51
6	2,1-11		
7		2,1-11	
8			2,1-11

L. Kierspel interpreta Juan 2-4 como un quiasmo pero, a diferencia de los autores apenas evaluados, no considera que la “fe” o los “días” constituyan los temas estructurantes de la sección. Su análisis descubre que el relato de la purificación en el templo (2,13-22) es un relato paralelo al encuentro de Jesús con la Samaritana (4,1-42), porque los dos pasajes proponen el cambio geográfico del centro de culto. Para Kierspel los

<sup>23</sup> L. KIERSPEL, “Dematerializing” Religion: Reading John 2-4 as a Chiasm”, *Bib* 89 (2008) 526-554 (aquí 527-532).

<sup>24</sup> J.H. BERNARD, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John* (ICC; Edinburgh 1928) 33-34; M.-É. BOISMARD, *Du Baptême à Cana (Jean, 1,19-2,11)* (Lectio Divina 18; Paris 1956) 14-15.

paralelos entre 2,13-22 y 4,1-42 son evidentes <sup>25</sup>. La lectura conjunta de estos dos pasajes “introduce al lector en una cristología del templo que negocia la nueva fe en contraste con las formas materiales del culto judío y gentil” <sup>26</sup>. El centro del díptico concéntrico está formado por el diálogo con Nicodemo (3,1-21) y por el testimonio del bautista (3,22-36) <sup>27</sup>. De acuerdo con esta interpretación, el tema que unifica la sección Juan 2-4 es la novedad que Jesús introduce con relación a las formas de verdad judías y gentiles <sup>28</sup>. Según Kierspel esta novedad se define por el contraste entre lo físico y lo espiritual <sup>29</sup>. La novedad del evangelio consiste, en fin, en su capacidad de de-construir la visión antigua de mundo (impuesta por la religión) para proponer un nuevo acceso a Dios: ya no un santuario, sino el mismo Hijo de Dios.

La interpretación de Kierspel es bastante sugestiva: la des-materialización del culto como clave de lectura de Juan 2-4 permite entender ciertamente los relatos de la purificación del templo y del encuentro con la Samaritana. Esta “rejilla de lectura”, sin embargo, resulta un poco estrecha cuando se aplica a los dos signos en Caná. Si bien “la fe en el Hijo” y en su palabra definen un nuevo acceso al Padre en 2,1-12 y 4,43-54, la lectura de Kierspel no explica por qué, o cómo sucede esta transformación en los protagonistas y en los lectores. Nuestra interpretación busca demostrar, en este sentido, que la narración del segundo signo no sólo enmarca la sección denominada “anillo Caná” <sup>30</sup>, sino que también determina, a través de la conjunción entre agnición y peripecia, la transformación del lector ideal del relato.

<sup>25</sup> (1) La pregunta de los samaritanos por el centro de culto retoma la cuestión de la sustitución del templo en el relato de la purificación del templo. (2) Los dos relatos localizan el cambio del culto en el mismo tiempo. (3) Las dos historias se centran en el motivo de la sustitución como parte de la crítica de Jesús al culto. Cf. L. KIERSPEL, “Dematerializing” *Religion: Reading John 2-4 as a Chiasm*, 540.

<sup>26</sup> L. KIERSPEL, “Dematerializing” *Religion: Reading John 2-4 as a Chiasm*, 543.

<sup>27</sup> Estos dos pasajes presentan el mismo tipo de secuencia: exposición narrativa, diálogo, monólogo; la mayor densidad teológica se encuentra en los monólogos de los dos relatos. L. KIERSPEL, “Dematerializing” *Religion: Reading John 2-4 as a Chiasm*, 543-548.

<sup>28</sup> C.H. DODD, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge 1953) 303.

<sup>29</sup> El templo físico por uno espiritual, el nacimiento físico por uno espiritual, el bautismo físico por uno con el espíritu santo. “En una palabra, el centro de la nueva religión introducida por Jesús se propone como una ‘des-materialización’ de una religión que funciona sin lugares físicos y sin medios de purificación. [...] [En este sentido] El cuarto evangelio redefine el acceso a Dios”. L. KIERSPEL, “Dematerializing” *Religion: Reading John 2-4 as a Chiasm*, 550-551.

<sup>30</sup> La inclusión con el primer signo ya se menciona en H. VAN DEN BUSSCHE, *Jean: Commentaire de l'Évangile spirituel* (Bruges 1967) 199; véase también R. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John*. Introduction, Translation, and Notes (AncB 29; Garden City NY 1966-1983) 93, 194-195.

### III. LA UNIDAD DE LA NARRACIÓN CONTRA EL ANÁLISIS DE LA REDACCIÓN

La articulación de peripecia y agnición en Jn 4,46-54 explica de manera más adecuada algunas expresiones del texto que, hasta hace poco, la interpretación diacrónica consideraba redaccionales. A continuación evaluaremos brevemente algunas hipótesis de los estratos de redacción, así como su comprensión de algunos términos difíciles.

La relación de Jn 4,46-54 con Mt 8,5-13 y Lc 7,1-10 se ha explicado de dos formas. En primer lugar, los tres relatos se interpretan como variantes de una misma tradición y reflejan la “teologización” o recopilación narrativa de un mismo acontecimiento. En este caso se suele identificar el ἑκατόνταρχος con el βασιλικός. (2) En segundo lugar, el relato de Jn 4,46-54 se interpreta como parte de una “σημεῖα Quelle” (que incluiría la primera parte del evangelio), originalmente independiente de los evangelios sinópticos. En este caso el protagonista principal es judío (βασιλικός) y no romano (ἑκατόνταρχος).

F. Neirynck ha criticado duramente diversos autores por postular estratos de redacción o tradiciones pre-juaneas intermedios entre los evangelios sinópticos y el de Juan <sup>31</sup>. Él reconstruye, por ejemplo, la interpretación de A. Dauer como sigue: la forma pre-juanea de este relato es una transformación post-sinóptica de Mt 8,5-13 y Lc 7,1-10. Según Dauer, la dependencia literaria directa de Juan con relación a los Sinópticos difícilmente se puede demostrar. Por esta razón considera indispensable postular una tradición intermedia que podría pertenecer también a la *Semeiaquelle* <sup>32</sup>. Jn 4,46-54 es redaccional en cuanto retoma libremente Mt 8,5-13 después de haber sido modificado en Lc 7,1-10.

A. Dauer piensa que las evidencias principales de la existencia de una fuente pre-juanea son la tensión entre los dos ἐπίστευσεν (4,50.53), las semejanzas entre 2,1-11 y 4,46-54, y el vocabulario no-juaneo del relato. F. Neirynck concede que existen semejanzas entre Jn 4,46-54 y 2,1-11, además, que la tensión entre los dos ἐπίστευσεν difiere notablemente de Lc 7,10. Sin embargo, no considera que estas evidencias demuestren dos niveles de composición de Jn 4,46-54. Él prefiere, en este sentido, la hipótesis de lectura de H-P. Heekerens <sup>33</sup>, en cuanto demuestra la

<sup>31</sup> F. NEIRYNCK, “John 4:46-51: Signs Source and/or Synoptic Gospels”, *ETHL* 60 (1984) 367-375.

<sup>32</sup> A. DAUER, *Johannes und Lukas*. Untersuchung zu den johanneisch-lukanischen Parallelperikopen Joh 4,46-54/Lk 7,1-10 – Joh 12,1-8/Lk 7,36-50; 10,38-42 – Joh 20,19-29/Lk 24,36-49 (FzB 50; Würzburg 1984) 120-125.

<sup>33</sup> H.P. Heekerens, a diferencia de Dauer, identifica las partes redaccionales de Jn 4,46-54 con el evangelio de Lucas y con una *Vorlage* de la historia de los milagros, es decir, con una fuente pre-juanea intermedia que no es la *Semeiaquelle* sino una *Zeichenquelle*.



dependencia de los Sinópticos <sup>34</sup>, pero sin postular un periodo demasiado largo de la tradición post-sinóptica previo a la redacción juanea. F. Neirynck considera, en fin, “acceptable” la interpretación de Dauer, pero reitera con insistencia (contra Dauer, Heekerens y otros) que se debe abandonar la hipótesis de un estado de composición intermedio entre Juan y los Sinópticos.

F. Neirynck reconstruye y critica por razones análogas a las anteriores la interpretación de S. Landis <sup>35</sup>. Este último siguiendo a Wegner, reconstruye Q y distingue de ella el material lucano propio (*Sondergut*); reconstruye, además, la *Semeiaquelle* (SQ) (que incluye la constatación de Jn 4,53a pero no la agnición y omite del texto los términos οὖν y πάλιν). Según Neirynck, la lectura de Landis es sesgada porque desde el comienzo se concentra en el supuesto motivo pre-juaneo; critica su procedimiento metodológico por desconocer el valor redaccional de los evangelios sinópticos y por separar arbitrariamente el material de Q del de SQ, cuando, en realidad, las dos fuentes son redaccionales. Gran parte de la crítica de Neirynck se concentra, de hecho, sobre la interpretación del v. 48 que Landis considera una armonización con Mateo y Lucas (ayudado de material Marciano) <sup>36</sup>, mientras que Neirynck lo considera de cuño juaneo. Su crítica reside en el hecho de atribuirlo a una tradición pre-juanea.

¿Cómo se deben interpretar, entonces, los indicios de una intervención redaccional en la tradición o en las fuentes anteriores al relato? Las diferencias más notables con relación a los evangelios sinópticos se entienden generalmente como muestras del material propio de Juan, a saber, el uso del término βασιλικός (Jn 4,46.49), el reproche aparente de Jesús (v. 48),

H-P. HEEKERENS, *Die Zeichen-Quelle der johanneischen Redaktion*. Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des vierten Evangeliums (SBS 113; Stuttgart 1984) 51-63, especialmente 57-59.

<sup>34</sup> Interpretación más cercana o en línea con la de M.-É. Boismard – A. Lamouille. Véase F. NEIRYNCK, *Jean et les synoptiques*. Examen critique de l'exégèse de M.-É. Boismard (BETHL 49; Leuven 1979) 93-120. Cf. M.-É. BOISMARD – A. LAMOUILLE, *Synopse des quatre Évangiles en français*: avec parallèles des apocryphes et des Pères, Vol. III: L'Évangile de Jean (Paris <sup>2</sup>1977) 146-149.

<sup>35</sup> F. NEIRYNCK, “Jean 4,46-54: Une leçon de méthode”, *ETHL* 71 (1995) 176-184.

<sup>36</sup> J. Beutler resume muy bien la cuestión en los siguientes términos: “Un argumento de peso a favor de la dependencia directa de Jn 4,46-54 de los sinópticos consiste en que Juan toma directamente Mt 8,13, un versículo claramente perteneciente a la redacción de Mateo (y no a ‘la fuente Q’), con el motivo de la curación ‘en aquella hora’. Otro motivo, que con frecuencia se considera adición joánica, es la negativa de Jesús de acceder a la exigencia de ‘signos y milagros’. Respecto a este motivo, Neirynck remite sus lectores al evangelio de Marcos, específicamente a Mc 7,26-29; 8,11s; 9,19; 13,22. Estos textos han sido retomados recientemente por G.R. Beasley-Murray y U. Schnelle en sus comentarios”. J. BEUTLER, *Comentario al evangelio de Juan* (Comentarios al Nuevo Testamento; Estella 2016). *Das Johannesevangelium*. Kommentar (Freiburg 2013) traducido por Gerardo Vanegas, 135.

la duplicación de ἐπίστευσεν (vv. 50.53). ¿Puede acaso la comprensión de la trama narrativa explicar de forma más adecuada estos indicios?

El uso del término βασιλικός en lugar del de ἑκατοντάρχης, como aparece en los Sinópticos (Mt 8,13; Lc 7,6), ha sido interpretado como un cambio intencional en la tradición, o incluso como la presencia de una tradición diferente, con el propósito de subrayar la identidad judía del oficial real <sup>37</sup>. La prueba más importante de este cambio intencional, para hacer del episodio originalmente dirigido a un público pagano, uno dirigido a un público judío, se encuentra en Flavio Josefo, quien utiliza el término βασιλικός para designar un grupo militar del círculo de Herodes <sup>38</sup>. En contra de este argumento, sin embargo, se debe señalar que Josefo usa el mismo término en muchas otras ocasiones sin connotación judía exclusiva <sup>39</sup>. Si la utilización de este término no es concluyente para indicar por sí misma una reedición de la tradición sinóptica, ¿cuáles alternativas de interpretación permite el relato? La primera mención del “oficial real” (βασιλικός) (v. 46) forma parte del marco narrativo de Jn 4,46-54, es decir, de la presentación de los personajes y de la delimitación del espacio y el tiempo del relato. La segunda mención del mismo (v. 49) presenta dos particularidades, quizá más importantes, para la comprensión de la trama narrativa: primero, el cambio al discurso directo en 4,49; y segundo, la designación de Jesús como Señor (κύριος) por parte del “oficial real”. La función del discurso directo en el v. 49 no consiste solamente en repetir la solicitud ya hecha <sup>40</sup>, sino que junto con la reticencia inicial de Jesús (v. 48) crea un efecto “suspense” <sup>41</sup>, o en términos narrativos, configura la “complicación” de la trama narrativa. Por otra parte, el hecho de poner el nombre del Señor en labios del oficial sugiere ya una confesión de su fe <sup>42</sup>. Estas dos observaciones consideradas conjuntamente no subrayan el carácter judío o no-judío de la confesión de fe del

<sup>37</sup> R. BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 152 (nota 3). Véase la comprensión contraria (“The official at Cana [...]. Complete faith in a non-Jewish context”) en F.J. MOLONEY, “From Cana to Cana (John 2,1 – 4,54)”, 200. Compárese con L. KIERSPEL, “Dematerializing” Religion: Reading John 2–4 as a Chiasm”, 527-532. A propósito de la realidad del βασιλικός P.J. Judge sugiere que el narrador deja intencionalmente ambigua su identidad histórica. Véase la discusión y la bibliografía secundaria en P.J. JUDGE, “The Royal Official: Not so Officious”, 306-307.

<sup>38</sup> JOSEFO, *Vita*, 400-401. Cf. R. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John*, 190-191.

<sup>39</sup> Véase JOSEFO, *Antiquitates Judaica*, 8.258-9; 8.414-5; 9.225-6.

<sup>40</sup> A diferencia de muchos autores que afirman que el v. 49 sólo repite la información del v. 47. Cf. J. BEUTLER, *Comentario al evangelio de Juan*, 134.

<sup>41</sup> El suspenso se crea en el lector implícito que no sabe hasta este momento si Jesús va a responder a la petición o no.

<sup>42</sup> La mayoría de los estudiosos considera, de hecho, la figura del oficial real como un “tipo” de respuesta a la palabra de Jesús. Cf. P.J. JUDGE, “The Royal Official: Not so Officious”, 306-307.

oficial <sup>43</sup>, tampoco prueban una reedición de la tradición sinóptica, sino que demuestran la importancia de la agnición del βασιλικός. Según el narrador juaneo la confesión de Jesús como Señor necesita de un reconocimiento previo, en este caso, de la “hora salvífica” en la que Jesús cambia la suerte del hijo a punto de morir.

La falta de coherencia entre el reproche de Jesús (4,48) y la petición del oficial (4,47.49) se ha interpretado generalmente como una “marca redaccional”, indicio claro de la reelaboración de una tradición conocida en los evangelios sinópticos (Mt 8,5-13; Lc 7,1-10). En este caso, sin embargo, un detalle permite interpretar el conjunto de manera diferente: la fórmula “signos y prodigios” <sup>44</sup>, fórmula bien conocida en el AT y ya estudiada por muchos autores y por medio de la cual se expresa el reproche de Jesús en Jn 4,48, se limita al “signo” en la conclusión del relato (v. 54). ¿Por qué el narrador omite, llegado el final, el “prodigio” (τέρας)? En primer lugar, porque no cuenta los detalles de una curación; en segundo lugar, porque subraya la fe (un creer distinto). La afirmación “tu hijo vive” (vv. 51.53) contrasta, de hecho, con el diagnóstico “está a punto de morir” (v. 47). El relato, sin embargo, nos ahorra muchas informaciones: no dice que el hijo haya muerto, no se dice que tenga una enfermedad que lo haga sufrir (cf. Mt 8,6) y, sólo después de la peripecia, llegados a la agnición al final del relato, el lector se entera de que lo aquejaba una fiebre (literalmente: la fiebre lo abandona) (v. 52). El narrador parece dar mayor importancia a la fe, que a la peripecia misma. ¿Cómo se llega a esta conclusión? Porque la condición propuesta por Jesús (“si no veis / no creéis”) no se cumple; el oficial real, de hecho, cree sin haber visto, más aún, él nunca llega a ver a su hijo sano o fuera de peligro. Cuando pide la información a sus siervos (vv. 51-52), no pregunta por los detalles de la curación o por la salud de su hijo, sino que pregunta por la “hora” del evento. De esta manera el narrador desplaza hábilmente la atención del lector sobre la agnición del oficial. El desenlace del relato (v. 53) insiste efectivamente en ello: el padre supo que en aquella hora Jesús había emitido su palabra. El creer que se menciona allí (v. 54b) es,

<sup>43</sup> J.P. Meier precisa que la etnicidad *histórica* del oficial es deliberadamente ambigua. J.P. MEIER, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vol II: Mentor, Message, and Miracles (ABRL; New York, NY 1994) 721-722. Cf. P.J. JUDGE, “The Royal Official: Not so Officious”, 309.

<sup>44</sup> Entre los muchos paralelos de esta expresión en la LXX el más interesante es Ex 7,3-4: “yo endureceré el corazón del Faraón y multiplicare mis signos y prodigios (τὰ σημεῖά μου καὶ τὰ τέρατα) en la tierra de Egipto, pero el Faraón no los oirá”. Sobre el uso de esta fórmula en el Cuarto Evangelio véase el apéndice III de R. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John*, 525-532.

además, diferente del anterior (v. 50), porque no es sólo personal sino que incluye toda su casa.

La duplicación de la expresión “creyó” (ἐπίστευσεν) (Jn 4,50.53) se puede interpretar, igualmente, como indicio de la creación de un narrador y no de la edición de un redactor. El primer “creyó” (v. 50) describe la obediencia del oficial real a la palabra de Jesús: vete (porque tu hijo vive) y el oficial cree (y por eso) va. El segundo “creyó” (v. 53) no repite sin más la fe del oficial en la palabra de Jesús, sino que describe el resultado de la agnición del padre: él reconoce que en aquella hora Jesús había pronunciado su nuevo diagnóstico. En este punto se muestra de nuevo la habilidad del narrador: ya no se refiere a la palabra (λόγος) de Jesús, sino a la “hora” (ὥρα) del evento <sup>45</sup>. Nótese que la así llamada “teología de la hora” se concentra, de hecho, en la subsección (vv. 52-53) donde se desarrolla la agnición (ἀναγνώρισις). El reconocimiento de la hora en que su palabra se vuelve eficaz constituye el objeto de esta fe renovada que incluye la familia extendida del oficial, y que siguiendo los indicios del Nuevo Testamento, incluye el creer de la comunidad <sup>46</sup>. Así, la duplicación del creer (vv. 50.53) permite comprender que el narrador no sólo dilata el desenlace de su relato, sino que por este medio desplaza la atención del lector sobre sus objetivos más importantes: la demostración de que el (verdadero) signo es una agnición de fe y de que su reconocimiento incumbe tanto al individuo como a la comunidad.

#### IV. CONCLUSIÓN: EL MODELO (PATTERN) NARRATIVO DEL SEGUNDO SIGNO EN EL CUARTO EVANGELIO

C.H. Giblin criticó R. Bultmann por haber ignorado en su momento las características esenciales del modelo (*pattern*) común de los signos del Cuarto Evangelio <sup>47</sup>. Según Bultmann, la resistencia de Jesús a la

<sup>45</sup> La noción de la “hora” se usa sin duda en el Cuarto Evangelio con sentido teológico. En el contexto inmediato de Jn 4 véase el diálogo con la Samaritana 4,6.21.23. Los estudios sobre la “hora” en el evangelio de Juan son innumerables, se destacan por ahora: J. BEUTLER, “Die Stunde Jesu im Johannevangelium”, en *Studien zu den johanneischen Schriften* (SBAB 25; Stuttgart 1998) 317-322; C. MORRISON, “The ‘Hour of Distress’ in Targum Neofiti and the ‘Hour’ in the Gospel of John”, *CBQ* 67 (2005) 590-603. Véase un *status quaestionis* completo en Z. GROCHOWSKI, *Il discepolo di Gesù nell’ora della prova (Gv 18-19), luogo di rivelazione del Maestro* (SBLub 13; Lublin 2015) 21-22 (nota 11).

<sup>46</sup> “The best parallels are found in Acts where we have a series of individuals who became believers along with their (whole) households (10:2, 11:14, 16:15, 31, 34, especialmente 18:8)”. R. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John*, 196. Véase también J. BEUTLER, *Comentario al evangelio de Juan*, 136-137.

<sup>47</sup> Ch.H. GIBLIN, “Suggestion, Negative Response, and Positive Action in St John’s Portrayal of Jesus”, 198.

petición del oficial real no parece consistente con la descripción de Jesús que en este evangelio conoce todo con anticipación <sup>48</sup>. Para Giblin las características esenciales de todo el modelo también aparecen en otros textos del Cuarto Evangelio <sup>49</sup>. R. Brown, por ejemplo, cuando analiza la articulación entre los dos signos de Caná, usa el término “modelo” (*pattern*) para definir la secuencia: petición, rechazo aparente e indirecto de la petición, insistencia del solicitante, concesión por parte de Jesús, respuesta que conduce, a su vez, a que otros crean en él. En ninguno de los casos se dice explícitamente cómo sucede el milagro <sup>50</sup>. Según Giblin el modelo propuesto por Brown es bueno y suficiente para explicar los dos signos de Caná, pero no para explicar otros relatos donde reaparece el “modelo general” (v. gr. Jn 7,2-14; 11,1-44) <sup>51</sup>. Si bien todos estos estudiosos se han referido a la importancia del modelo narrativo, ninguno de ellos ha mostrado hasta ahora con igual claridad que este modelo está constituido por la articulación entre peripecia y agnición.

Nuestra interpretación del segundo signo en el Cuarto Evangelio se puede sintetizar, entonces, como sigue: (1) El enfoque narrativo resulta más útil que los enfoques metodológicos anteriores para explicar la unidad de acción de Jn 4,46-54 y su función dentro de la primera parte del evangelio <sup>52</sup>. (2) La conjunción entre agnición y peripecia explica de manera más coherente y menos hipotética las aparentes rupturas o faltas de lógica del llamado segundo signo, a saber, el uso extraño del término βασιλικός, la incoherencia entre la petición del oficial y el reproche de Jesús, la duplicación del creer (ἐπίστευσεν) del oficial. (3) El modelo narrativo encontrado en los vv. 46-54 se caracteriza, en fin, no sólo por la conjunción entre peripecia y agnición, sino especialmente por la dilatación

<sup>48</sup> En esta “no-correspondencia” (“entspricht der Bitte schlecht”) se encuentra, sin embargo, el sentido profundo de la fe, sobre todo, si se compara la respuesta de Jn 4,48 con la de los Evangelios Sinópticos. Cf. R. BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 152.

<sup>49</sup> Las características esenciales del modelo serían: sugerencia, respuesta negativa, acción positiva. Cf. C.H. GIBLIN, “Suggestion, Negative Response, and Positive Action in St John’s Portrayal of Jesus”, 197, 210-211.

<sup>50</sup> R. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John*, 194.

<sup>51</sup> Giblin, además, sugiere al final de su estudio que la respuesta de la fe en todos estos signos pone en evidencia que la actividad de Jesús en el Cuarto Evangelio tiene carácter no sólo revelatorio, sino también profético (a diferencia de Bultmann que los consideraría sólo revelatorios). Cf. C.H. GIBLIN, “Suggestion, Negative Response, and Positive Action in St John’s Portrayal of Jesus”, 210-211.

<sup>52</sup> Nuestro ejercicio metodológico muestra efectivamente dos miradas que no siempre se encuentran: la del científico histórico crítico, entrenado para descubrir estratos de tradición, y la del literato entrenado para descubrir el objetivo de una narración. A propósito de estos dos enfoques en diálogo y búsqueda de certezas, véase J.L. SKA, *Specchi lampade e finestra: introduzione all’ermeneutica bíblica* (Lapislazzuli; Bologna 2014).

del desenlace narrativo que permite desplazar la atención del lector de la peripecia a la agnición, tanto individual como comunitaria.

Nuestro ejercicio metodológico ha puesto en evidencia, por último, una observación, quizá menos relevante para la exégesis científica o académica, pero sugestiva para la hermenéutica espiritual (incluso psico-espiritual): la transformación del creyente individual y comunitario se enuncia aquí mediante la toma de conciencia de un lector que no se encuentra ya delante de un patrón, señor de casa, o administrador oficial, sino delante de un padre que cree (Jn 4,53). La conjunción entre peripecia y agnición conlleva efectivamente una “pérdida”: el despojo de un rango, de un título o una función, pero también una “aceptación”: la de un creyente que decide cuidar de su familia y comunidad.

Pontificio Istituto Biblico  
Via della Pilotta, 25  
I-00187 Roma (IT)

Juan Manuel GRANADOS ROJAS, S.J.

#### SUMMARY

This paper proposes a narrative reading of the “second sign” in the Fourth Gospel. The plot of John 4,46-54 includes both a *περιπέτεια* and an *ἀναγνώρισις*, i.e. not only a healing, but also an acknowledgment. This narrative pattern delays solving the plot to stress a new comprehension of the faith in Jesus. Our analysis also suggests an all-inclusive explanation of several discrepancies between the Synoptic account and the Johannine one: the mention of βασιλικός rather than ἑκατόνταρχος, the doubling of ἐπίστευσεν (vv. 50.53), and the incongruity between the Royal Officer’s request and Jesus’ response (vv. 47.48).

# RECENSIONES

## Vetus Testamentum

James S. ANDERSON, *Monotheism and Yahweh's Appropriation of Baal* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 617). London – New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015. x-147 p. 16 × 24. £9.00

Bei dieser Monographie handelt es sich um die überarbeitete Fassung einer Dissertation, die an der Universität Sheffield unter der Betreuung von Diana Edelman entstanden ist und dort im Jahr 2011 vorgelegt wurde. Die Arbeit versteht sich als Beitrag zur gegenwärtigen Debatte über die Entstehung des alttestamentlichen Monotheismus. Anderson geht von der Hypothese aus, dass ein wesentlicher Faktor beim Zustandekommen des Monotheismus eine Rolle spiele. In zahlreichen Texten des Alten Testaments sei erkennbar, dass Eigenschaften, die anderen Göttern zugeschrieben wurden, vor allem Baal und Aschera, im Laufe der Zeit immer mehr auf YHWH übertragen worden seien. Die Verehrung anderer Götter habe darum an Bedeutung verloren, ja sei unnötig geworden. Diesen Prozess sucht Anderson in seinem Buch zu rekonstruieren. Dabei bedient er sich zweier Kategorien, die auf Mark S. Smith zurückgehen, um die Entwicklung hin zum Monotheismus zu beschreiben: „convergence“, d.h. die Übertragung von Eigenschaften anderer Götter auf YHWH, und „differentiation“, d.h. die Betonung der Unterschiede zwischen YHWH und anderen Göttern (vgl. M.S. Smith, *The Early History of God. Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel* [Grand Rapids, MI 2002]). Der Schwerpunkt des Buches liegt aber auf der ersten Kategorie. Anderson beansprucht jedoch den Prozess der „convergence“ besser erfassen zu können, indem er zwischen drei Typen von Polemik unterscheidet, die der Übertragung von Eigenschaften zugrunde liege: explizite, implizite und verdeckte Polemik.

Insgesamt besteht das Buch, das durch drei Indizes erschlossen wird (Bibelstellen, Sach- und Autorenregister), aus sieben eher kurzen Kapiteln. Kap. 1 ist ein Forschungsbericht, in dem Anderson zwischen zwei Richtungen in der modernen Diskussion über die Entstehung des Monotheismus unterscheidet: Die erste, die er mit W.F. Albright in Verbindung bringt, führt den Monotheismus Israels auf Mose zurück und sieht Fremdgötterkulte in der Geschichte Israels als Beispiele des Abfalls vom ursprünglichen, d.h. mosaischen Monotheismus an. Dieser Richtung steht eine andere gegenüber, die von einem weitverbreiteten Polytheismus in Israel ausgeht, der erst in exilisch-nachexilischer Zeit vom Monotheismus abgelöst worden sei. In Kap. 2 erfolgt eine Zusammenstellung von alttestamentlichen Texten und archäologischen Zeugnissen, die für die Hypothese eines weitverbreiteten Polytheismus ins Feld geführt werden. Dieser Hypothese schließt sich auch Anderson an. In Kap. 3 beschreibt er die drei Formen der Übertragung von Eigenschaften anderer Götter auf YHWH. Kap. 4 handelt von Baal, wie



er in ugaritischen und biblischen Quellen dargestellt wird. Kap. 5 und 6 widmen sich den alttestamentlichen Texten, in denen Anderson eine Form der polemischen Übertragung von Eigenschaften erkennt. In Kap. 7 schließlich sucht Anderson den Prozess zu rekonstruieren, der in Israel zur Ausbildung des Monotheismus geführt habe.

Ohne Zweifel behandelt Anderson in seiner Monographie ein Thema, das in der derzeitigen alttestamentlichen Forschung hochaktuell ist und zugleich sehr kontrovers diskutiert wird. Dennoch ist fraglich, ob das Buch der Forschung neue Impulse geben wird. Insgesamt gesehen, fallen zahlreiche Mängel methodischer und argumentativer Natur auf, die es immer wieder erschweren, der Argumentation des Verfassers zu folgen. Vier Punkte seien hervorgehoben.

1. Anderson kennt die Grenzen des Begriffes „Monotheismus“, vor allem in seiner verbreiteten Definition, wonach es nur einen einzigen Gott gebe und die Existenz anderer Götter ausgeschlossen sei (so 1). Dennoch verwendet er im gesamten Buch den Terminus „Monotheismus“ im Hinblick auf das Alte Testament und die Gesellschaft, in der seine Texte entstanden sind. Ähnliches gilt für Begriffe wie „Polytheismus“, „Synkretismus“ und „Monolatrie“. Solche Kategorien haben eine lange Tradition in Theologie und Religionswissenschaft. Sie sind jedoch in den meisten Fällen kaum geeignet, die komplexe religiöse Wirklichkeit zu beschreiben, die hinter den alttestamentlichen Texten wenigstens partiell erkennbar ist oder die man aufgrund von archäologischen Funden zu rekonstruieren sucht. Anderson muss daher den Begriff „Monotheismus“ mehrfach durch Adjektive näher zu beschreiben (z.B. „strict monotheism“, 28-29). Weitgehend unerwähnt bleiben andere Kategorien, die gerade in den letzten Jahrzehnten in die Diskussion eingeführt worden sind und zu einer stärker differenzierenden Beschreibung von Texten und archäologischen Funden beitragen können (vgl. den nirgendwo zitierten Band von F. Stolz, *Einführung in den biblischen Monotheismus* [Darmstadt 1996]). Diese betreffen vor allem soziale wie auch geographische Unterschiede (z.B. „familiäre Religion“, „household religion“, lokale Kulte).

2. Anderson selbst vertritt die mit dem Begriff „native pantheon“ bezeichnete Hypothese, wonach in Juda und Israel in der Königszeit eine Mehrzahl von Göttern verehrt worden sei, an deren Spitze YHWH und Aschera standen (vgl. 3, 31, 39, 96). Im Laufe der Zeit seien die Eigenschaften Ascheras (ebenso wie diejenigen Baals) auf YHWH übertragen worden. Diese Hypothese sucht Anderson vor allem in Kapitel 2 zu begründen, wo die methodischen Schwächen des Buches erstmals deutlich zutage treten. Diese betreffen vor allem den oft unreflektierten und tendenziösen Umgang mit den alttestamentlichen Texten sowie den archäologischen Funden. Drei Beispiele:

- a) Der Bericht von der Kultreform Joschijas in 2 Könige 23 wird als tendenziös und historisch unzuverlässig angesehen, höchstens als eine indirekte Quelle für polytheistische Praktiken in der Königszeit. Dagegen scheint die Erzählung vom goldenen Kalb in Exodus 32 als eine historische Quelle zu gelten, mit der sich der Polytheismus Israels auf die Exoduszeit zurückführen lasse: „Golden was the calf, not the days of the Exodus“ (24). Eine Begründung für diese Behauptung sucht man vergebens. Die Frage, ob Exodus 32 Auskunft über die religiösen Verhältnisse der Exoduszeit geben kann, wird nicht gestellt, ebenso wenig diejenige, welche theologischen Intentionen die Verfasser möglicherweise geleitet haben. Schließlich fehlt jede Diskussion mit der umfangreichen Sekundärliteratur zu Exodus 32.



- b) Die Inschrift von Kuntillet Aḡrud, die „YHWH und seine Aschera“ erwähnt, wird in dem Sinne gedeutet, dass Aschera als YHWHs Paredra zu gelten habe (31). Die Diskussion mit der Sekundärliteratur und den dort diskutierten alternativen Positionen fällt sehr knapp aus. Detaillierte Analysen der Inschrift und ihres archäologischen Kontext werden nicht zitiert (z.B. O. Keel – C. Uehlinger, *Göttinnen, Götter und Gottessymbole* [QD 134; Freiburg 1992] 237-281; C. Frevel, *Aschera und der Ausschließlichkeitsanspruch YHWHs* [BBB 94/2; Weinheim 1995] 854-912). Anderson folgert aus der Inschrift und ihren angeblichen ugaritischen Vorbildern, dass die Präsenz der Aschera — verstanden als Göttin — neben YHWH als die Norm in Israel und Juda zu gelten habe. Weiterhin habe diese Inschrift nicht als das Zeugnis einer lokalen Volksreligion zu gelten, sondern Bezüge zur Monarchie Israels (sic!) seien wahrscheinlich (31). Wiederum bleibt offen, warum die Inschrift von Kuntillet Aḡrud repräsentativ für eine in der Königszeit in Israel und Juda verbreitete Verehrung eines Götterpaars „YHWH und Aschera“ stehen soll. Auf einem isolierten Befund, der als solcher schwer erklärbar ist, sollte man keine zu pauschalen Theorien aufbauen. Weiterhin fragt man sich, wie man sich die Beziehung zur Monarchie Israels vorstellen muss. Ist damit impliziert, dass die Könige Israels ebenso YHWH und Aschera gemeinsam verehrt haben? Und ist damit die Religion von Kuntillet Aḡrud mit der offiziellen Religion Israels zu identifizieren?
- c) Schließlich werden die Texte von Elephantine sowie die zahlreichen in Israel und Juda gefundenen Figurinen mit gynomorphen Zügen bemüht, um die Theorie des „native pantheon“ zu stützen (32-34). Doch müssen die Verhältnisse von Elephantine, wo nachweislich mehrere Götter bekannt waren, auch für das Israel der Königszeit gelten? Ist es methodisch legitim, Parallelen zwischen zwei geographisch weit voneinander entfernten Gesellschaften herzustellen und zu folgern, dass dem Israel der Königszeit wie auch den Einwohnern Elephantines ein „strict monotheism“ unbekannt gewesen sei? Was die Figurinen angeht, kann man wirklich von einem „current consensus“ (33) ausgehen, wonach diese auf eine Verehrung Ascheras hinweisen? Vgl. hierzu etwa M.-Th. Wacker, *Von Göttinnen, Göttern und dem einzigen Gott. Studien zum biblischen Monotheismus aus feministisch-theologischer Sicht* (Münster 2005), 60, für die die Identifikation der Figurinen mit Aschera nicht zwingend ist.

3. Die Theorie, wonach Eigenschaften anderer Götter auf YHWH übertragen wurden, wird vor allem in den Kapiteln 3–6 entfaltet. Immer wieder fragt man sich, ob Andersons Argumentation im Einzelfall zwingend ist. Ohne Zweifel werden in Jes 44,2; 46,3 auf YHWH weibliche Züge übertragen. Aber bedeutet dies, dass er hier die Funktionen Ascheras übernimmt (vgl. 45)? *Mutatis mutandis*, warum sollte im LXX-Zusatz in Hos 13,4 — sofern er eine hebräische Vorlage gehabt haben sollte — ein versteckter Hinweis auf den Sturmgott Baal zu finden sein (vgl. 82)? Schließlich fragt man sich, warum in Ps 113,9, wo der unfruchtbaren Frau Kindersegen verheißen wird, YHWH Eigenschaften Ascheras annimmt (96). Zuletzt bleibt festzustellen, dass vielfach die Unterschiede zwischen expliziter, impliziter und verdeckter Polemik verschwimmen. Ob diese Kategorien von großem Nutzen für die Textanalyse sind, ist zu bezweifeln.

4. Aus Kap. 7 sei nur noch eine These herausgegriffen: Für Anderson geht der Ursprung des Monotheismus auf die Zeit der Omriden zurück. Zwar werden diese

in der Geschichtsschreibung Israels negativ beurteilt, vor allem wegen der angeblichen „Sünde Jeroboams“, von der auch sie nicht abgewichen seien. Doch sei dies mit einer in Juda entwickelten Polemik gegenüber Israel zu erklären, da das Südreich das mosaische Erbe beanspruchte (113-114). Bleibt zu fragen, ob Anderson hier nicht seiner eigenen Theorie von einem „native pantheon“ widerspricht.

Abschließend bleibt festzuhalten, dass Andersons Argumentationen mit sehr vielen Hypothesen behaftet sind und den aktuellen Forschungsstand oft nicht genügend berücksichtigen. Inwieweit das Buch dennoch zum Verständnis der Texte beiträgt, die YHWH Eigenschaften anderer Götter zuschreiben, muss die weitere Forschung zeigen.

Schönenbergstraße 28  
D-79346 Endingen

Eberhard BONS

J. Blake COUEY, *Reading the Poetry of First Isaiah. The Most Perfect Model of the Prophetic Poetry*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015. xiv-247 p. 14 × 22. £65.00

For Couey, “poetic questions have not been at the fore of recent research on Isaiah [...]” (11), having been eclipsed by an interest in macro-structural coherence in the Isaianic corpus. By way of a contrast with such an interest, Couey characterizes the object of his own study as centering on “poetic questions” (11-18). Thus, this monograph concerns itself largely with micro-structural analyses of lineation and imagery in the poems of First Isaiah.

Reading the poetry of First Isaiah could mean one of two very different things, depending on whether one takes “First Isaiah” as a reference to the 8th century BC prophet or as a literary shorthand for chs. 1–39 of the book. By “First Isaiah”, Couey means the former (2), selecting as his data set a body of critically reconstructed poems that he regards as probably deriving from the 8th century context. In most cases, Couey’s critical procedure involves simply extracting the poem from, and thereby disregarding as irrelevant, its current literary context. In a few cases, however, his goal of achieving the probable original form of the poem necessitates a more substantial reverse engineering of the present form of the text.

Chapter one examines lineation, “the basic feature that distinguishes verse from prose” (21). Stressing that lineation proposals must emerge in the process of exegesis, Couey discusses several potential markers of lineation in Isaiah. Parallelism, though not universal in poetry, is “the most consistently reliable” criterion (27). The stylistic or syntactic aspects of enjambed verse often create a pause that indicates the end of a line. The phonological structure of biblical poems is not metrical, but does exhibit rhythm of a free verse variety, so that scansion can offer “an approximate handle on line length for descriptive purposes” (44). Expected pauses occurring at “certain syntactic boundaries” enables “syntactic descriptions of the shapes of poetic lines” (49). Each of these categories is given a careful and balanced analysis by Couey. Thus, unlike much prior research, he joins those who are now giving careful consideration to lineation as such, though absent is any attempt at providing a new theoretical framework (cf. E. Grosser,

“A Cognitive Poetics Approach to the Problem of Biblical Hebrew Poetic Lineation: Perception-Oriented Lineation of David’s Lament in 2 Samuel 1:19-27”, *HS, forthcoming*).

Chapter two analyzes “the network of relationships among lines” (68), the forward movement and related poetic effect of various line and line group combinations. Movement within the poem is accomplished primarily by means of couplets which are usually joined by parallelism, though enjambment also joins line pairs by means of syntactic dependency. Parallelism can proceed in a narrative fashion, wherein “non-semantic effects [of parallelistic equivalence] hold the two lines together, allowing the poet greater flexibility to make semantic distinctions to create an impression of narrative progression” (76); but parallelism can also proceed by non-narrative development or even non-semantic development. Triplets, quatrains — less common than couplets in Isaiah — are also joined and advanced by various combinations of parallelism and enjambment. Along with cataloguing, parallelism and enjambment “also operate at the level of line groups, connecting discrete couplets and triplets within the poem” (112). The forward dynamics of each of these lines joining options are richly illustrated by Couey, who deftly notes the ways in which various line combinations establish pattern-expectation that can then be exploited to poetic effect. In all of this, he rightly emphasizes the inseparability of form and meaning.

While the heart of Couey’s book is his treatment of the line and its place in the poem, chapter three offers an extended consideration of imagery and metaphor related to agriculture and animals. Viewing metaphor as a cognitive mechanism, he examines Isaianic metaphors — “the majority of Isaianic images” (141) — as the mapping of a source domain upon a target domain, which (he argues) better accounts for the complexity of the phenomenon. His approach to Isaianic imagery is historicist, since understanding an image “depends on its audience’s possession of certain shared knowledge or experience” (145). It is also poetic, since poetic “images live, move, and have their being within the lined discourse of verse” (146). In each case, Couey skillfully shows how the image unfolds or shifts within (and thereby contributes to) the reader’s progressive experience of the poem, itself constrained by the poem’s particular configuration of lines. Within this process, he argues, the impact of these images “is largely contained within the lines in which they occur, occasionally extending to continuous line groups but seldom beyond” (186).

How has Couey’s initial framing of the problem of “poetic questions” affected his analysis of Isaianic poetry? In part, he conceptualizes his project somewhat negatively in reaction to book-oriented approaches. He states, “In some tension with recent approaches, my study treats individual poems in Isaiah 1–39 largely in isolation, with minimal attention to their arrangement or connections to other parts of the book” (12). This way of framing the study invites the question: what, if anything, is lost in such an approach by way of a description of Isaianic poetry? For Couey, little if anything is lost, since this corpus is best thought of “in its final form as a collection or anthology” (13). This, no doubt, forms the basis for his treatment of the poems in isolation, though this does not fit easily with his claim that his “readings of these texts as poems do not finally demand a particular view of their composition” (19). On the contrary, it would seem that accepting the compositional model of an “anthology” is precisely what requires his treatment of these poems in isolation from their literary context.

But to what degree is a proper understanding of the poetic parts — i.e. the line and imagery of an individual poem — dependent on the larger whole that is the poem's context? Scholars have long recognized the existence of composite poetry in First Isaiah, and they have ascribed its existence in part to editorial efforts at coordinating the different poems of this diverse and uneven collection. A case in point is 5,25-30, widely regarded as a single unit of poetic text in its present form. Following an established line of scholarly tradition, Couey disregards v. 30, relocates what remains — which he takes as a description of “the advancing army of an unnamed nation” (169) — and attaches it to 9,7-20 (Eng. 9,6-21) as the original conclusion to this poem (110, 169-173). This reconstruction certainly has merit: v. 30 is probably secondary, taking up **וינהם** from v. 29 and adding the often editorial **היהוה ביום ההוא**; the refrain of v. 25 ties in nicely with its use in 9,7-20; and **גוים מרחוק** in v. 26 probably derives from an original **גו מרחק**, though this is not attested in the manuscript evidence. And yet at least as early as B. Duhm (*Das Buch Jesaja* [HK; Göttingen 1922] 63-64), scholars have argued that someone added verse 30 to the poem as its conclusion to link it to 8,22 – 9,1 (English trans. 8,22 – 9,2). Compare 5,30b (**ונבט לארץ והנה חשך צר**) with 8,22 (**ואור חשך בעריפיה**) and 9,1a (**ואל ארץ יביט והנה צרה וחשכה ומעוף צוקה**) (העם ההלכים בחשך ראו אור גדול). In this connection, others argue that someone altered v. 26 to read **לגוים מרחוק**, thereby linking the poem with 11,12 (so H.G.M. Williamson, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1-27, 1: Isaiah 1-5* [ICC; London 2006] 395-410). Compare 5,26a (**ונשא נס לגוים מרחוק**) with 11,12 (**ונשא נס לגוים ואסף גדחי ישראל [...] מארבע כנפות**) (ושרק לו מקצה הארץ). It is surely striking that precisely the beginning and ending of the poetic announcement of the foreign threat in 5,26-30 look as though they have been coordinated with the two major royal oracles of Isaiah 1–12, in order to define the scope of that judgment preceding their fulfillment and thus restoration.

In another example, Couey notes the exceptional length of Isa 14,26 — a “5:5 couplet” — which he explains as an attempt by the poet to create “a sense of expansiveness appropriate for the grand theological claim” (49). Be that as it may, some have rightly observed the way in which this couplet brings to a conclusion two threads of thought found in several prior passages (so D.A. Teeter, “Isaiah and the King of As/Syria in Daniel’s Final Vision: On the Rhetoric of Inner-scriptural Allusion and the Hermeneutics of ‘Mantological Exegesis’”, *A Teacher For All Generations. Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam* [eds. E.F. Mason *et al.*] [JSJSup 153/I; Leiden 2012] 193-199). “The plan that is planned against the whole earth” reverses the “plan” that the nations “plan” in 8,9-10, which by implication of juxtaposition is related to the Assyrian threat of 8,7-8, the very theme in 14,24-25 to which 14,26 provides a conclusion. “The hand that is outstretched against all the nations” likewise reverses “the hand outstretched” against God’s people, a repeated refrain that not coincidentally first occurs in 5,25 (9,11.16.20 [Eng. 9,12.17.21]; 10,4). If 14,26 deliberately ties together and concludes these two argument threads, then its exceptional length is likely to derive from this fact as much as it is from its role in presenting a sweeping theological claim. Thus, concerns for coherence beyond the individual poem affected both the choice of imagery as well as the type and distribution of lines within the poems themselves.

In both examples, the broader literary context has made itself felt on the poetic texture of the passage, suggesting that a neglect of the former will lead to a skewed understanding of the latter in cases such as these. And it must be

observed that these are not isolated instances according to a sizable body of scholarly opinion. Moreover, surely Couey is right that poetic form cannot be separated from poetic meaning. If examples like these are at all representative of the poetry of Isaiah 1–39, then that poetic meaning also cannot be separated from the poem's larger literary context, which may well have influenced the poet's selection of everything from lexical item, to metaphor, to line and line group combination. If some of these macro-structural features of the poems stem from the prophet himself, then Couey's analysis falls short of fully realizing its goal. If these features are wholly secondary to the prophet's work, then they fall outside the scope of Couey's study. In either case, such features properly belong to any study devoted to reading the poems of First Isaiah.

Duke Divinity School  
407 Chapel Drive, Box #90968  
Durham, NC 27708-0968  
U.S.A.

Jacob STROMBERG

Brooke G. LESTER, *Daniel Evokes Isaiah*. Allusive Characterization of Foreign Rule in the Hebrew-Aramaic Book of Daniel (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 606). London – New Delhi, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015. xii-229 p. 16 × 24. \$85.99

Lo studio, come si dichiara negli *Acknowledgments* iniziali, rielabora una dissertazione di cui non si precisano anno e sede di consegna. La pubblicazione si articola in cinque capitoli, incentrati rispettivamente su “Come Daniele evoca Isaia” (1-30), “Intertestualità e allusione in Daniele” (31-59), “Allusioni a Isaia nelle apocalissi” (60-106), “Allusioni a Isaia nei racconti di corte” (107-133), “Isaia e il governo delle nazioni in Daniele” (134-164). Segue un'appendice (165-205) in cui, dopo sintetiche annotazioni sulla natura dei testimoni del testo ebraico-aramaico di Daniele, del testo ebraico di Isaia e del testo greco di Daniele, si offre con traduzione, apparato critico e succinta discussione, il testo masoretico dei passi trattati, ossia Is 7,7; 8,7-8; 10,12.22-25; 14,12–15.25; 26,19; 28,22; 37,7.23; 39,7; 43,2; 45,14; 52,13; 53,11; 65,24; 66,24; Dn 1,3; 2,46; 3,25.27; 7,8; 8,10–13.19; 9,20-27; 11,10.17.22.26.33.35-37.40.44-45; 12,3.10. Il volume si chiude quindi con la bibliografia (206-214), l'indice dei passi biblici (215-226) e l'indice degli autori citati (227-229).

Nel primo capitolo si presenta lo scopo dello studio, ovvero offrire un'interpretazione delle allusioni danieliche a Isaia che rispetti la narrazione del libro (“a narrative reading of Daniel's allusions to Isaiah has not yet been offered”, si afferma a p. 30). Daniele, per sfidare la comunità dei tradizionalisti del suo tempo legati alla teologia deuteronomista, si appella all'autorità di Isaia, sollecitando i suoi lettori a cercare nella sua profezia le chiavi per interpretare gli eventi drammatici della persecuzione di Antioco IV Epifane e più in generale per comprendere la natura del dominio delle nazioni su Israele. Lester inquadra pertanto la sua ricerca richiamando le osservazioni circa l'uso di Isaia in Daniele avanzate da Ivan Engnell, Isaac Leo Seeligman, Harold Louis Ginsberg, Aage Bentzen tra il 1948 e il 1954. Procedo quindi a precisare il concetto di allusione alla luce della

metafora: “allusion is a way of conjuring a figure by speaking in one text in terms reminiscent of an earlier text” (5). Rifacendosi essenzialmente a Ziva Ben Porrat (1976), Carmela Perri (1978) e Gian Biagio Conte (1986), definisce l’allusione come un espediente retorico accertabile che conduce il lettore a completare il significato di ciò che legge con le connotazioni di quanto è evocato (7). Quale risoluzione autoriale coraggiosa, essa prevede il coinvolgimento del lettore nella produzione del senso del testo attraverso riferimenti più o meno espliciti (8). L’esegeta che si cali nei panni del lettore, investito di tanta responsabilità, vorrà di contro dapprima dimostrare l’intento di alludere da parte dell’autore, indi suggerirne un’interpretazione (con onestà si scrive conseguentemente: “My suggestions [...] are provisionally offered in a spirit of inviting further proposals”, 13). Venendo a considerare la natura del testo indagato, si valuta la “matrice narrativa” di Daniele e la sua ambientazione babilonese in cui Isaia concorre a plasmare l’immagine del potere straniero (9). Sempre per preparare il terreno all’indagine prefissata, si affrontano tre questioni di critica letteraria inerenti alla storia della composizione del testo: l’unitarietà di Daniele 7, alla luce della quale commentare il v. 8, l’originario impiego dell’ebraico nei cc. 1 e 8–12, la funzione nevralgica della preghiera deuteronomistica in seno al c. 9. Con l’espressa volontà di lasciare a ulteriori ricerche acclarare se il traduttore greco riconosca le allusioni a Isaia, si limitano a pochi ragguagli talune precisazioni sulle versioni greche di Daniele.

Nel secondo capitolo si intende collocare la disamina delle allusioni isaiane all’interno della comprensione dell’intertestualità di Daniele. Cominciando dalla maniera in cui Daniele 2 riecheggia il Deutero Isaia, si riprendono le analisi di Peter von der Osten-Sacken (1968), John Gammie (1981) e Choon Leong Seow (2003), per mostrare come da un lato si voglia rispondere a una percezione di fallimento della profezia preesilica e dall’altro si indichi nelle vicende degli amici alla corte di Nabucodonosor la realizzazione delle promesse di Isaia. Lester, sulla scia dei Commentatori, si sofferma dopo ciò sull’esegesi che Daniele 1 e 9 praticano su passi della tradizione per loro problematici: Daniele 1 cerca di armonizzare 2 Cr 36,6-7 (secondo cui Ioachim è deportato a Babilonia) con 2 Re 24,1 (ove il medesimo re, vassallo di Nabucodonosor, si ribella dopo tre anni), Daniele 9 interpreta i settant’anni di Geremia 25 alla luce di 2 Cr 36,21 (che vede l’esilio come un periodo sabbatico per la terra) e Lv 25,2,4 (con la sua concezione di un anno sabbatico ogni sette anni) per giungere a settant’anni sabatici. Passando a Daniele 7, mette a fuoco come alcune allusioni non siano necessariamente letterarie, rimandando piuttosto a immagini, schemi tipologici, miti del combattimento primordiale, come ampiamente documentato da Jürg Egger (2000). Venendo alle allusioni inter-letterarie, richiama note dipendenze di Daniele 2 dalla storia di Giuseppe e, sinteticamente, Dn 8,17 (che evoca Ab 2,3), Dn 10,5-6 (con elementi di Ezechiele 9–10), Dn 7,3-6 (con gli animali di Os 13,7-8), Dn 8,13 (con la richiesta di Zac 1,12). In conclusione accenna a luoghi di “self-echo”, interni allo stesso libro di Daniele, su cui *inter alios* ha scritto Reinhard Kratz (1999, 2001).

Il terzo capitolo si concentra sulle allusioni isaiane in Daniele 7–12. Il sintagma **ושטף ועבר**, tradotto in Dn 11,10.40 con “inundatingly passing over” (62), consente al lettore di riconoscere nell’invasione di Antioco IV una nuova presenza dell’antica Assiria, inarrestabile come il corso rigonfio di acque dell’Eufrate a cui già Is 8,8 si riferiva. In tale situazione è di indubbio sollievo avvertire un’eco della fine che Dio da lungo tempo ha decretato sull’Assiria (**עד-כלה ועם**



כלה ונחרצה [...] עוד מעט מזער וכלה ועם in Dn 11,36 rimanda a כִּי נַחֲרָצָה נַעֲשֶׂתָה di Is 10,23.25). Un'allusione meno distinta è individuata, con Ginsberg, nella predizione della morte del sovrano nei pressi della "santa montagna" dove si è accampato raggiunto da notizie allarmanti: Dn 11,44-45 richiama l'abbandono dell'assedio di Sennacherib (Is 37,7) e l'umiliazione della sua nazione nella terra di Israele ("sui miei monti", come dice il Signore in Is 14,25). Il riconoscimento di tali allusioni faciliterebbe quindi la lettura di Dn 9,26-27 con la menzione di "un principe che deve arrivare" e del "desolatore". Dapprima mediante un'allusione poi con una citazione di Is 10,22-23 si riproporrebbe la parabola di Is 10,5-26: dopo un decreto di rovina emanato da Yhwh su Giuda, il resto del popolo vedrà finalmente la punizione dell'Assiria, strumento dell'ira divina. I medesimi avvenimenti della persecuzione seleucide, preannunciati in Dn 8,19 per "la fine dell'ira" (בְּאַחֲרִית הַזֶּעַם), sono dunque letti con Is 10,25 che prospetta la cessazione dell'ira (וְכָלָה זֶעַם). Il re empio di Dn 8,23, esperto in trucchi, ripresenta l'orgoglio del sovrano assiro di Is 10,13 che vantava la propria sapienza. Sempre procedendo a ritroso, Lester può così commentare Dn 8,10-13 con Is 14,12-15 e accostare la caduta di colui che calcolava di ascendere al cielo agli atti orgogliosi del piccolo corno che sfida l'esercito dell'Altissimo. Lo stesso piccolo corno, che nell'apocalisse di Daniele si affaccia in 7,8 con occhi di uomo e con una bocca che pronuncia enormità, è interpretato sulla scia di Is 10,12 e 37,23, due brani che registrano la sanzione divina alla *hybris* assira e in particolare alla disfida di Sennacherib. I saggi israeliti che Daniele vede subire la persecuzione, i cosiddetti *maskilîm*, sono all'opposto simili al Servo di YHWH. Costoro, come già da tempo rilevato dai Commentatori, avranno successo dopo essere stati umiliati ("They take their name from a perceived epithet which begins Isaiah's poem of the Servant of Yhwh: 'Behold, my servant shall enlighten'", 99). Il loro destino di risurrezione, così come "l'obbrobrio eterno" in serbo per gli empi, sarà conforme alla profezia di Is 26,19 (יְקוֹמוּן הַקִּיצוֹ וְרַגְנוֹ שְׁכֵנֵי עִפּוֹר) e 66,24 (וְהָיָה דְרָאוֹן). Il veggente, che in Dn 9,20-23 si trova ascoltato mentre ancora pronuncia la sua preghiera, conferma la veracità di Is 65,24, brano che assicura l'immediato esaudimento degli esuli penitenti (עוֹדֵי הֵם מְדַבְּרִים).

Il quarto capitolo si concentra su Daniele 1-3, non trovando allusioni a Isaia nei cc. 4-6. Rielaborando quanto suggerito da Seow, si legge Dn 2,34-35.45 alla luce di Is 41,15-16 e 51,1: la pietra che si stacca dalla montagna, frantuma la statua e riempie la terra richiama la roccia da cui Israele è stato tratto nonché il tempo in cui il popolo come una trebbia acuminata renderà le colline come pula. L'atto di omaggio che Nabucodonosor offre a Daniele in 2,46 si suggerisce realizzi profezie quali Is 45,14; 49,7.23; l'agio con cui in Dn 3,25-27 i giovani possono camminare indenni tra le fiamme è combinato a Is 43,2 (in armonia con l'esegesi ivi offerta nel Targum Jonathan); la presenza degli esuli alla corte babilonese è infine collegata a Is 39,7 con la deduzione che Daniele e i suoi amici siano eunuchi (125). Il capitolo quinto di fatto raccoglie i risultati delle osservazioni esegetiche dello studio.

Il volume riunisce utilmente i distinti impieghi della profezia di Isaia e così contribuisce a una migliore comprensione del carattere scribale del libro di Daniele. L'autorità dell'antico maestro gerosolimitano doveva indubbiamente sostenere nuove posizioni teologiche che cercavano di affermarsi in epoca seleucide dopo che, a seguito della vittoria sui Tolemei, Antioco III favorì l'insediamento di "scribi del tempio" (*Antichità giudaiche* 12.142). Costoro, di ritorno dalla diaspora

come quanti erano arrivati all'epoca di Esdra e Neemia, dovevano imbattersi in fazioni politico-religiose ben più influenti e radicate. Queste potevano tacciarli di essere stranieri e quelli replicare con Is 56,3-5, presentandosi come autentici servitori di YHWH. Quanto appena suggerito potrebbe a titolo d'esempio ampliare le scarse annotazioni alle pp. 126-127. Lester preferisce d'altronde non addentrarsi nel contesto storico-politico dell'opera danielica. Il suo scritto risulta per il resto discretamente curato, nonostante talune ripetizioni non necessarie (es. pp. 24 e 105; 25-30 e 165-170), alcune imprecisioni linguistiche, errori tipografici ("Ezekiel" anziché "Daniel" nell'indice dei passi citati), la curiosa citazione di "The Persian Wars" di Erodoto. La bibliografia, in genere in lingua inglese, segnala principalmente contributi anteriori al 2006. Tra le assenze più rimarchevoli si registrano gli apporti di Arie van der Kooij e, curiosamente, l'edizione critica di Olivier Munnich (Göttingen 1999). Il libro risulterà ciononostante utile sia per la precisione delle analisi sia per la prudenza di giudizio.

Facoltà Teologica dell'Emilia-Romagna  
p.le Bacchelli, 4  
I-40136 Bologna

Marco SETTEMBRINI

Johanna RAUTENBERG, *Verlässlichkeit des Wortes. Gemeinschaftskonzepte in den Reden des Buches Tobit und ihre Legitimierung* (BBB 176). Bonn, V&R Unipress – Bonn University Press, 2015. 221 p. 16 × 24,5. €39,99

The Book of Tobit, an edifying Jewish novel, has received substantial scholarly notice in recent years. With the publication of the Qumran fragments 4Q196 – 4Q200, the book has become an essential text for understanding the complex milieu of Second Temple Judaism. It is viewed as a vital textual witness to the fermentation and network of theological ideas and images during this fertile period.

In the scholarship, the Book of Tobit is usually perceived as a classic literature of the dispersion. The narrative is often described as a text motivated by the historical reality of the Diaspora or the geographical dislocation of the Jews. The exilic condition of the Jews at the time of its writing is often assumed as the critical point of departure for understanding the text's *raison d'être*. The problem of the enduring dispersion of the Jews during the epoch of Second Temple has become the prevailing lens for the hermeneutics of the Book of Tobit.

The monograph under review, which is a doctoral dissertation presented to the Faculty of Philosophy of the Dresden University of Technology in 2015, aims to mitigate, eliminate even, the weight of geographical exile in the interpretation of Tobit. This it does by isolating the various passages of speech in the story and differentiating their claims from the narrative episodes in the book. The speeches of Tobit and Raphael are employed as the hermeneutical frames for the narrative sequences in the book. The work prioritizes thus the influence of this element over the narrative action in the book. Examining the speeches using a structuralist approach and sociological categories, the author posits the thesis that the Book of Tobit offers a conception of community that is not tied to a particular geographical



locale. In this view, the story does not tackle the problems of life in exile but the process of community inclusion and exclusion, implying that exile is social.

Borrowing insights from Bernhard Giesen, a sociologist who posits a primordial (natural), traditional (ritual and remembrance) and universalistic (religious experience) coding to describe the construction of community boundaries based on self-understanding and a corresponding perception of the outside world, the author notes that there are two concepts of community cohesion represented in the speeches of Tobit and Raphael. The author aims to show that the universalistic model replaces the primordial understanding of community evident in the beginning of the story. With the aid of structuralist criticism, the author investigates the narrative claims and designs that authorize and legitimize the change in the understanding of community.

The study has three main sections. The first chapter analyzes the speeches of Tobit and Raphael. These speeches are said to have a concentric structure with the dialogue between Tobit and Raphael in 5,11-16 as the center: A) Tobit's monologue in 1,3 – 2,14; B) Tobit's prayer in 3,2-6; C) Tobit's wisdom discourse in 4,3-21; D) Dialogue between Tobit and Raphael in 5,11-16; C') Raphael's revelatory speech in 12,6-20; B') Tobit's praise in 13,2-18; and A') Tobit's farewell speech in 14,3-11.

As the story progresses, the dimension of space shrinks from the land of Israel to Nineveh through the marketplace in Nineveh to the house of Tobit. The same also applies for the dimension of time, with the story set in a span of centuries and years from the destruction of the Solomon Temple to a span of days and minutes in the dialogue between Hannah and Tobit. The story also reduces the number of characters with which Tobit interacts, from the tribes of Israel to his brothers in Nineveh to his neighbors and later his son and wife. As the story shrinks the dimensions of time and space, a dynamic is created between Tobit's speech and the narrative turn of events. Tobit's speech defines his self-understanding, which involves ideals that set the boundaries for righteous behavior. As the story starts, these boundary markers are intimately associated with the primordial coding for the community in terms of ethnicity and genealogy. Tobit views himself in the role of helper, but later becomes the one who is helped. Tobit's portrait changes from one who is superior to one who is blind and distrustful. The narrative seems to point out that such type of boundary making results in crisis. These crises isolate and distance Tobit from his community, with alienation from his wife as the ultimate segregation. This circumscribes the persona of Tobit with a conspicuous unreliability. The narrative events undercut Tobit's monologue claims, inspiring in the reader an attitude of skepticism toward them as Hannah's question does at the end of the altercation.

The question remains whether Tobit is open to the notion of community that is not defined in terms of blood and ethnicity. In a speech to his son, his maxims that promote solidarity widens his notion of community to include others but his emphasis on endogamy shows that he is still tied to restricting community in terms of blood and lineage. His encounter with Raphael who laughs off his questions regarding his lineage seems to open up the possibility that Tobit might be free from the primordial construction of community boundaries. Indeed, Raphael's revelatory speech, which offers no hints of the primordial notion of belonging, betrays an inclusive and universalistic model of community. Raphael bases the relationships in this type of open community on the praise of God and not on tribes

or consanguinity. Tobit's response in his praise sees Jerusalem as receiving all, transforming the city into a metaphor for a community of believers. In his farewell speech, Tobit reflects the awareness that community boundary markers in terms of genealogy belong to the past. The future, however, shows an outline of a community that is independent of ethnic belonging and grounded on the praise of God in terms of behavior that manifest righteousness, truth and charity.

Employing insights from formalist criticism, the second section examines the narrative episodes of 3,7-15 (Sarah's situation); 3,16-17 (response to the prayers of Tobit and Sarah); 5,17b – 11,19 (the healing of Sarah and Tobit); and 14,12-15 (Tobiah's adult life). The inner story of the healing of Sarah and Tobit from 5,17b – 11,19 can be considered a textual unity. In this story, verbs that denote movement, for instance, form a coherent word field. Further, the narrative unity possesses a chiasmic structure in which the expulsion of the demon from the wedding chamber is central. This narrative section likewise enjoys a plot understood as a narrative sequence of events in which a causal relationship exists, thereby resolving the problem posed in the beginning of the story. This narrative unit serves a fundamental function in understanding the dialogues and speeches that facilitate the characters' portrayal. Raphael's dialogues, for instance, radiate authority and reliability and the narrative sequences that attend to the report of the healing of the afflicted characters prove them to be such. Later, the epilogue provides a retrospective legitimating function to the speeches of the healed Tobit.

The third section is synthetic in approach, explaining the individual passages in terms of the overall structure of the story and their function in their respective placement in the narrative. Despite the dominance of speeches over the narrative units, the combination of speech and story in the literary structure of the book allow the narrative passages to create a space for explaining the change in the content of the speeches and in the attitude of the speakers. The inner story, when compared to the speeches, modifies the themes introduced in the speeches by changing the semantic field and context for the motifs. In this way, Tobit's monologue in 1,3 – 3,6 eventually yields to a disposition of dialogue and openness to listen to others. Tobit responds positively to the notion of community as it is reflected in Raphael's speech. At the end of the story, Tobit is no longer worried about himself but about the lives of his son's children and of Jerusalem, which they embody. The crisis spelled out in Tobit's monologue is later overcome in the inner story and Tobit's isolation gives way to his integration into his family circle.

Interestingly, it is claimed that the monologue of Tobit should be placed at the end after Tob 12,20. When Tobit's monologue is found at the start of the story, it influences the process of reading that makes any critical estimation of Tobit and his claims almost impossible. It also creates the impression that Tobit is the hero of the story when in fact he hardly plays any role in the inner story of Tob 5,17b – 11,19. Indeed, it is Raphael who is the ideal figure of truth and reliability. Of course, this bolsters the argument that Tobit's monologue incorrectly establishes the problematic of geographical exile in the story. But is this necessary? Might it be better to wrestle with the story as it presently stands in the manuscripts instead of arranging it for the sake of the reader?

The study provides various insights that can lead to a more profound appreciation of the Book of Tobit. Still, questions remain: is it necessary to argue that the

book is not concerned with addressing how Jews are to cope with the Diaspora but with how a Jewish community can succeed regardless of whether the community lives in or out of the land? This reading, if correct, gives the impression that Tobit is resigned to his geographical exile with no hopes of returning to the Promised Land. To be sure, they can still be a distinct community of Jews defined in other ways. The end of the story, however, seems to envision otherwise. Moreover, would not the physical alienation of the members of the community contribute to the redefinition and strengthening of boundaries? Would there be a greater emphasis on community behavior if Jews were living in the land among those who espouse the same values? Normally, it is the geographical displacement that gives rise to social dislocation and adjustments. Are social and geographical readings of exile then necessarily opposite, or can they complement each other? This study raises these questions but its focus on the speeches as they relate to the narrative passages in light of the book's notion of community is perhaps its strongest contribution to Tobit studies.

9845 Memorial Drive  
Houston, Texas 77024  
U.S.A.

Francis M. MACATANGAY

### Novum Testamentum

Brant PITRE, *Jesus and the Last Supper*. Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U.K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015. xiv+590 p. 15,5 × 34,5. \$55.00 – £35.99

Pitre studies the Last Supper historically and specifically wants to ask and give comprehensive answers to the following questions. Are Jesus' words and deeds at the Last Supper historically plausible; and if so, what did they mean? What does the Last Supper reveal about Jesus' self-understanding? How does the Last Supper fit into Jesus' eschatological outlook and the coming of the eschatological kingdom? Finally, what does the Last Supper reveal about Jesus' intentions for the community of his disciples.

Although in some aspects it needs to be nuanced, the historical method of E.P. Sanders impresses Pitre as best; for the former wisely directs his three sets of information or criteria are to be used in tandem. First, if evidence about Jesus is compatible or believable within his first century Jewish context, this favorably supports its historicity. Of course, the evidence we have for what Judaism was in the time of Jesus is limited and depends on the given scholar's familiarity with it. Also, Jesus in this Jewish context could have said and did things that were unusual and even shocking. Secondly, if a saying or deed of Jesus is both contextually plausible and coheres with or clarifies other first-century evidence about Jesus, we have an important argument in favor of its historicity. On this topic Pitre goes further than Sanders, for he thinks it reasonable to explore whether the gospels

might also provide us with “substantially reliable” accounts of the particular teachings, not the *ipsissima verba* but the *substantia verba Jesu*, i.e., the substance of Jesus’ words, or of the actions of Jesus. He holds that coherence is among the most significant factors in judging the historicity of such information and can along with other evidence explain data that may be obscure or difficult. The argument from coherence has its weakness since it depends on the historical reliability of other evidence brought to bear on any question about Jesus. To offset this weakness, Pitre does not depend on any one word or deed but on a judicious sampling of evidence about Jesus and explains how one piece of data coheres with another. Thirdly, if a saying or deed of Jesus not only fits with his historical context and other evidence about him but also explains why the early church acted and believed as they did, it can be concluded that the saying or deed can be traced back to Jesus. This criterion is more controversial than the previous two. Originally, scholars intended to argue for the historicity of anything unlikely to have been created by the early church, but this practice led to calling any evidence remotely similar to the practice and belief of the early church unhistorical or at least suspect evidence. Obviously, to call for such a gap between Jesus and the movement that followed him does not make sense. Like the other two this criterion has its weakness, for we do not know everything about the early church which, in fact, was quite diverse and many of its practices and beliefs are unclear or gradually being formulated. These three criteria are to be used in tandem and actually can be inverted and so used against the historicity of any given question. So, Pitre concentrates on the substance of Jesus’ words and does not spend much time evaluating differences in form and details among various gospel accounts unless they bear directly on the meaning of the text. Also, scholars are now more aware that relevant historical evidence is also found in John’s Gospel.

On the basis of these criteria, Pitre holds that it is reasonable, if somewhat less certain, that at the Last Supper Jesus as a new Moses not only inaugurated the eschatological covenant spoken of by the prophets but may have been instituting the new bread and wine of his presence. Paul does describe the bread of the Eucharist as uniting the recipients with Jesus himself (1 Cor 10,16-17), just as the Jewish people saw the bread of the presence symbolizing and effecting communion with YHWH on Sinai and in the tabernacle.

For Pitre, the substance of the Capernaum synagogue teaching about the bread from heaven and the true manna in John 6,48-66 is historically plausible as deriving from Jesus during his public ministry. Although shocking, this teaching is plausible in a Jewish context and coherent with a broad spectrum of other evidence about Jesus in the gospels. It is also in continuity with the early Christian belief in the Eucharist as the body and blood of Christ, as spiritual food and drink and the source of immortality.

Pitre admits the complexity of determining the date of the Last Supper and has no desire to be dogmatic, but he proposes a Passover hypothesis. In contrast to modern commentators on John, the ancient Jews did not think the 14 Nisan was the Feast of the Passover; rather it did not begin until the lambs were being eaten and so was 15 Nisan. So, John 13,1, “Before the feast of the Passover”, would refer to the same afternoon as found in the Synoptics before their description of the Last Supper (cf. Mk 14,12; Lk 22,17). This Passover hypothesis makes the best sense of the most data and leads to the conclusion that Jesus’ Last Supper was a Jewish Passover meal.

Jesus' words of institution reveal his imminent death as a redemptive sacrifice and himself as the Paschal Lamb of the eschatological exodus; his command to repeat his actions establishes a new Passover ritual. Moreover, if the words of institution were a prophetic sign, ancient Jews knew that prophetic signs were not just symbolic but efficacious and achieved what they symbolized; they also knew that keeping the Passover meant the lamb had to be consumed. Paul articulates this Christian realization when he writes, "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed; therefore, let us keep the feast" (1 Cor 5,7-8). The question about whether Jesus founded a church is inextricably bound up with the question of the Eucharist. If Pitre's study is correct and Jesus was establishing a new Passover and so a church; the remembrance now does not look back to the Exodus from Egypt but forward to the eschatological ingathering of Israel and the nations into the heavenly reality of God's kingdom where Jesus himself has already gone.

Pitre's contention that we readers of the NT can arrive at the substance of Jesus' words is reasonable; what is a little surprising is, that granted this understanding, he does not argue that the authors of the NT would certainly not have wanted to say anything that would alienate their readership, unless they were convinced that Jesus actually said something quite similar to what is in the NT text. After all, they were writing to attract people to faith not to alienate them. However, at the Last Supper Jesus presents the bread as his body and the cup of wine as his blood. These words had to strike a Jewish audience, probably any audience, as a kind of cannibalism and, even worse, the consumption of blood which is life and belongs only to God. That Jews find these ideas most offensive is clear from John 6,60-69 and the departure of many of Jesus' disciples.

Most scholars would agree that trying to determine what Jesus thought is not an easy, if not impossible, task. Jesus probably viewed himself as a prophet and, yes, as a prophet like Moses; see what the author says on pages 54-57. This would mainly embrace the Exodus, the covenant, manna, in short, any aspect of the Exodus in which Moses played a part. However, Pitre does not address the question that Moses was God's agent in carrying out the Exodus, establishing the covenant and giving the manna. God did these things. What Jesus was thinking at the Last Supper seems to involve more than being a new Moses.

Pitre argues that at the Last Supper, Jesus is not only establishing a new covenant but instituting the new bread and wine of the presence. On page 132 he points to the following parallels. The Bread of the Presence has: 1) twelve cakes for the twelve tribes, 2) bread and wine, 3) is a sign of the everlasting covenant, 4) is remembrance (*anamnēsis*) and 5) offered by the high priest and eaten by priests (Exodus 24-25; Leviticus 24). At the Last Supper, there are: 1) the twelve disciples for the twelve tribes, 2) bread and wine of Jesus' presence, 3) sign of a new covenant, 4) in remembrance (*anamnēsis*) and 5) the offering by Jesus eaten by the Twelve (Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; 1 Corinthians 11). Pitre includes wine with the bread of the presence because "unbloody" sacrifices often involved bread and wine. The minimum of attention given to the bread of the presence in the NT (Mk 2,24; Mt 12,4; Lk 6,4) and the need to introduce wine due to the type of sacrifice weaken Pitre's argument. Also, how persuasive are the above five parallels?

Pitre's contention that the substance of the Capernaum synagogue teaching about the bread from heaven and the true manna in John 6,48-66 is historically plausible as deriving from Jesus during his public ministry is not convincing.

Where the reader would anticipate finding the institution narrative John has the foot washing and its message of following Jesus' example (John 13,1-20). Most readers will find it much more plausible to view John 6,48-66 as the author's reading into an earlier time Jesus' words and actions at the Last Supper.

In a short review it is hard to do justice to Pitre's very carefully researched and precise study; historical critics will find it to be a conservative approach, but Pitre argues well. His book is an important contribution to any discussion of the Last Supper, especially, to the historical questions related to it. He challenges the NT student or scholar to reflect on her or his historical methodology and to enter into dialogue with him about the significance of the various details of the Last Supper. Pitre is provocative and challenging but always courteous.

Bellarmino House of Studies  
3737 Westminster Place  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
U.S.A.

Robert F. O'TOOLE

Holly BEERS, *The Followers of Jesus as the 'Servant'.* Luke's Model from Isaiah for the Disciples in Luke-Acts (Library of New Testament Studies 535). London – New Delhi, Bloomsbury, 2015. xvi-213 p. 16 x 24

Il volume in oggetto è la prima monografia pubblicata da H. Beers, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies presso il Westmont College di Santa Barbara, CA (U.S.A.). Dopo gli studi alla North Central University di Minneapolis (MN) e al Bethel Seminary di St. Paul (MN) ha conseguito il suo Ph.D. presso la London School of Theology.

Nel *primo* capitolo che coincide con l'introduzione (1-5) la Beers sostiene che Luca nel suo dittico (Luca-Atti) costruisce il ritratto di Gesù e dei suoi discepoli, mutuando aspetti peculiari della figura isaiana del Servo di YHWH. Egli è l'agente umano scelto da Dio per attuare il Nuovo Esodo descritto in Isaia 40-66 quale restaurazione finale d'Israele. Assieme ai quattro "canti" tradizionalmente afferriti all'immaginario del Servo (Is 42,1-7; 49,1-6; 50,4-10; 52,13-53,12) l'autrice considera anche il testo di Is 61,1-3. Alcuni di questi testi sono esplicitamente citati da Luca per promuovere l'identificazione del Servo con la figura cristologica (cf. Lc 4,18-19; 8,32-33; 22,37) e in Atti con quella dei discepoli, Paolo *in primis* (cf. At 13,47). Molte sono anche le allusioni ai testi isaiani ritracciate dalla Beers che trovano un riscontro nell'apparato critico della 28ª edizione del NT di Nestle-Aland (cf. Lc 2,32; 6,21; 7,22; 9,35; 23,33-34; 24,27.46; At 3,13; 4,27; 8,32-33; 10,38.43; 13,34; 17,24-25; 26,18.23).

Parecchi studi recensiti nell'introduzione (cf. M.D. Hooker, K.D. Litwak, D.L. Bock, R.I. Denova, D.W. Pao) si sono concentrati sullo sfondo isaiano di Lc-At, trascurando tuttavia i legami intertestuali con la figura del Servo. L'originalità del lavoro della Beers consiste nel dimostrare, sulla base del comune riferimento ai testi isaiani, come l'identità dei discepoli in Lc-At sia strettamente legata a quella di Gesù (3). Basti ricordare che, nel racconto dell'incontro con Cristo sulla via di Damasco, il Risorto s'identifica con i discepoli perseguitati da Paolo

(At 9,4-5) e che ad Antiochia di Pisidia Barnaba e Paolo citano il secondo “canto” del servo (Is 49,6) riferendolo a se stessi (At 13,47): come il Messia atteso da Israele è “luce per illuminare le genti” (Lc 2,32) così anch’essi si percepiscono inviati dal Signore come luce delle genti per portare la salvezza sino all’estremità della terra.

Sulla base di questo duplice riferimento — a Gesù e ai discepoli — dell’immaginario del Servo, l’autrice avanza una personale interpretazione (più volte ribadita nel corso dell’opera) circa la riluttanza di Luca nell’impiegare la categoria teologica di espiazione vicaria. Come risaputo, si tratta di una peculiarità del Servo del quarto “canto” che l’evangelista riscontra nella morte di Gesù solamente in Lc 22,19-20 e At 20,28. La Beers affronta l’annosa questione in modo “non convenzionale”: non parte chiedendosi se Luca intenda promuovere una teologia della croce o della gloria; convinta che egli applichi i tratti del Servo sia a Gesù sia ai suoi discepoli, ritiene che l’evangelista recepisca soprattutto quegli aspetti della figura isaiana accostabili sia all’uno sia agli altri. L’espiazione vicaria è un tratto tipico della figura cristologica, non trasferibile ai discepoli; per questo Luca non lo svilupperebbe. Per la medesima ragione, afferma la Beers, egli non racconta la morte di Paolo (177) e, aggiungiamo noi, anche quella di Pietro. Bisognerebbe tuttavia domandarsi — e l’autrice vi fa solo cenno (175, n. 300) — perché egli non rinunci a narrare la morte di Stefano e, in parte, quella di Giacomo (cf. At 12,1-3), modellandola su quella di Gesù. L’autrice cerca di giustificare l’impiego limitato della categoria di espiazione vicaria in Lc-At anche osservando che l’evangelista dialoga “a tutto tondo” e non in modo selettivo con la figura del Servo di Isaia. Tenuto conto di tutti i testi in cui compare questo personaggio, appare evidente che è sfaccettato e non riducibile, come spesso si ritiene, alla categoria di espiazione vicaria, per altro limitata al Servo del quarto “canto”.

Prima di concentrarsi sull’oggetto proprio della ricerca, la Beers dedica il *secondo* capitolo (6-30) a delineare i presupposti ermeneutici del suo studio, abbozzando una teoria dell’intertestualità in dialogo, anche critico, con la ricerca originata dagli studi di J. Kristeva. La lettura di questa parte, forse eccedente, risulta a tratti ostica e un po’ scolastica. A livello teoretico, l’autrice opta per un’ermeneutica organica ove autore, testo e lettore interagiscono sinergicamente nel processo ermeneutico per stabilire i rapporti di dipendenza tra i testi. Per una teoria del linguaggio e dell’interpretazione che renda giustizia sia all’autore sia al lettore, sarebbe tuttavia opportuno interrogarsi maggiormente sulle dinamiche di un’ermeneutica credente dei testi della Scrittura, in cui sia l’autore sia il lettore sono abilitati “dall’alto” nelle rispettive e specifiche funzioni, al fine di stabilire l’interdipendenza dei testi. Al termine del capitolo vengono presentati in modo intelligente i criteri tradizionalmente seguiti per evidenziare le connessioni intertestuali a livello letterario. La Beers riduce a tre i sette criteri proposti da R.B. Hays (27-29): (a) occorre anzitutto dimostrare l’accessibilità dei testi sorgente (nella fattispecie Isaia) e risalire all’ermeneutica dei medesimi in auge al tempo dell’autore; (b) osservare citazioni letterali e allusioni (ed eco) sulla base del lessico, dell’immaginario, di temi e motivi comuni; (c) rintracciare le motivazioni teologiche in forza di cui l’autore avrebbe promosso il rapporto intertestuale.

Nel *terzo* capitolo (31-48) il saggio presenta una perlustrazione dei temi principali di Isaia 40-66, soprattutto il motivo del Nuovo Esodo presentato come consolazione d’Israele e ribaltamento della situazione descritta in Isaia 1-39 (cf. Is 6,9-10). Contestualmente è offerta una trattazione organica della figura del



Servo, agente del Nuovo Esodo e dell'integrazione dei gentili nel piano storico-salvifico di YHWH. Questa figura obbediente e fedele a Dio, complessivamente rifiutata (49,7), che porta la giustizia senza usare violenza e apre gli occhi ai ciechi (42,1.4.6.7), assume un profilo personale (individuo) che tende a identificarsi corporativamente con Israele (41,8; 42,1 LXX; 44,1.2.21; 49,5 LXX; 45,4; 48,20). È il vero Israele, vessato dal resto del popolo, a cui Dio affida una missione, investendo la sua debolezza con la propria forza. Scelto e formato sin dal seno materno (44,1-2; 49,1.5.7), giustificato da Dio (53,11 LXX), questo personaggio affiora nel Secondo Isaia a partire da profezie messianiche precedenti (cf. Is 11,1-10) e penetra nel Terzo Isaia (61,1-3), assumendo un profilo plurale, giacché i suoi attributi vengono riferiti a un "gruppo di servi" (cf. 61,3-9). Essi sono il frutto del suo travaglio e proseguono la sua vocazione (53,10; 54,17), interpellando le nazioni.

Nel *quarto* capitolo (49-84) la Beers propone un'analisi a partire dai testi — soprattutto quelli del Mar Morto e i deuterocanonici — di come il giudaismo del Secondo Tempio recepisce la figura del Servo in chiave escatologica. In continuità col Terzo Isaia che già recupera tratti di questo personaggio applicandoli a una nuova collettività, parecchi gruppi giudaici si "appropriano" di questa figura messianica e la vedono incarnata sia individualmente in una figura storica sia collettivamente nelle rispettive comunità, per autolegittimare la propria identità.

Il *quinto* (85-125) e il *sesto* (126-175) capitolo mostrano come Luca, rispettivamente nel Terzo Vangelo e negli Atti, impieghi il libro di Isaia in continuità con l'ermeneutica inaugurata all'epoca del Secondo Tempio. Anch'egli tratta la figura del Servo in modo organico e in dialogo con tutto Isaia, interpretandola escatologicamente: essa trova compimento individuale in Gesù di Nazareth e corporativo nei suoi discepoli, giudei e pagani che, a partire dalla "cerniera" di Luca 24 e Atti 1, raccolgono e continuano la sua missione di Servo. Sono scelti (ἐκλέγομαι) e investiti dallo Spirito per portare agli uomini il lieto annuncio (εὐαγγελίζω) di una remissione integrale (ἄφεσις) che coincide con la consolazione d'Israele ed è luce per le genti, testimoni autentici (μάρτυς), consegnati (παράδομι) e rigettati ma riconosciuti giusti e riscattati da Dio, al pari del Servo e di Gesù, loro Maestro.

Il *settimo* (176-179) capitolo offre una buona sintesi di tutto il libro. Segue la bibliografia, prevalentemente in lingua inglese con qualche studio soprattutto tedesco, e l'indice dei testi e degli autori citati.

Col suo studio la Beers coglie uno dei tratti più interessanti del modo in cui Luca dialoga con le Scritture, proponendo al lettore un andirivieni continuo "da Mosè e da tutti i profeti". I punti di contatto tra Gesù e il Servo sono molteplici come pure le assonanze con altri personaggi del dittico, in particolar modo Paolo durante la sua "passione". Come accennato anche da Beers, di entrambi è messa in evidenza l'innocenza e la giustizia: forse anche sulla scorta del giudaismo del Secondo Tempio, Luca ha trovato nel giusto sofferente per eccellenza, il Servo di YHWH, un potente catalizzatore biblico per autenticare Gesù di Nazareth e i suoi discepoli e dunque il Vangelo.

Riteniamo tuttavia che la visione dell'autrice rischia talora di trascurare il radiale cristocentrismo dell'impianto tipologico lucano. Nell'ottica di Luca, soltanto attraverso l'evento Cristo si può giungere a una corretta comprensione dei *topoi* veterotestamentari in funzione della cristologia (cf. Lc 24,27). Per risalire alla



testimonianza scritturistica e perché questa si combini alla testimonianza dei discepoli, è necessario passare per l'evento cristologico. Ci si chiede dunque se l'applicazione di alcuni tratti del Servo alla comunità di sequela punti a stabilire una continuità tra questa figura e i discepoli o a promuovere il confronto / *synkrisis* con Cristo. Evocando anche in Atti la figura del Servo — forse in maniera più contenuta di quanto proposto da Beers — Luca è interessato a mostrare che i discepoli somigliano a Gesù più che al Servo d'Isaia. Occorrerebbe dunque verificare meglio come il rimando al Servo, soprattutto in Atti, sia funzionale alla cristologia, magari a partire da un'osservazione preliminare della narratività dei testi. Essa aiuterebbe a circoscrivere i motivi peculiari di ciascuna pericope presa in esame, facilitando e orientando il confronto intertestuale, perché sia il più organico e obiettivo possibile.

Via Cairoli, 20  
I-46100 Mantova

Lorenzo ROSSI

Susan Elizabeth HUMBLE, *A Divine Round Trip. The Literary and Christological Function of the Descent/Ascent Leitmotif in the Gospel of John* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology 79). Leuven, Peeters, 2016. xii-229 p.

Cet ouvrage publie une thèse de doctorat sous la direction de Gregory Robbins à l'université de Denver/Iliff School of Theology. Il se signale par l'ampleur de son information, la clarté d'exposition et l'originalité de son apport dans un argument déjà exploité dans l'exégèse johannique comme l'indique la bibliographie, en grande majorité anglophone. Du côté francophone, pour la méthodologie, A. Greimas et R. Barthes reviennent en force alors qu'ils datent déjà en francophonie. Le texte de la contribution est relativement court (125 pages) pour un nombre impressionnant d'appendices: 18, indiqués par les indices alphabétiques de A jusqu'à R (56 pages). Les appendices abondants allègent le corps des développements en rendant ceux-ci plus accessibles.

Le travail comprend six chapitres; le premier et le dernier servent respectivement d'introduction et de conclusion qui brillent par leur pénétration et leur lisibilité. En matière de thèse, ces qualités sont précieuses. Le Leitmotiv, bien défini, de la descente et de la montée sert de principe d'organisation qui ne concerne pas seulement les verbes descendre et monter, mais aussi venir, aller, et être envoyé, parmi de nombreux thèmes en constellation dont la fonction consiste à façonner la christologie de l'évangéliste (2). La méthode est définie comme thématique et structurale, inspirée surtout par le modèle actantiel de Greimas. Surprise! L'étude commence par la lecture d'un conte des Frères Grimm: Cendrillon, à l'aide de la grille greimassienne. Est-ce le bon choix pour aborder l'évangile johannique? N'aurait-il pas mieux valu recourir de l'intérieur de la Bible, par exemple à Ruth, Esther ou Judith, pour n'évoquer que quelques brefs recueils de l'Ancien Testament en prise sur Jean? Le parcours s'en ressent: la schématisation risque de ne pas faire assez droit au texte johannique dans sa sinuosité.

Toujours est-il que l'enquête est rondement menée. Le ch. 2 est consacré à la «méthodologie — construire une méthode thématique et structurale». Le recours

à une méthode structurale offre l'avantage de ne pas laisser les thèmes se multiplier au gré de leur rencontre et de les regrouper par des contraintes structurales. L'inconvénient vient de ce que les thèmes eux-mêmes ne sollicitent pas assez eux-mêmes leur rapprochement par des liens plus sémantiques que structuraux. Le lecteur peut être parfois gêné par ce qui apparaît comme la contrainte du modèle plus que la fidélité à la lettre, bien comprise, du texte évangélique.

Le ch. 3 rassure en ce sens par une application du modèle thématique et structural à l'évangile de Jean qui fait droit au texte, nombreuses citations détaillées à l'appui des versets qui contiennent les cinq verbes de descente (καταβαίνω, ἔρχομαι, ἐξέρχομαι, ἀποστέλλω, et πέμπω) et les six de montée (ἀναβαίνω, ὑπάγω, μεταβαίνω, πορεύω, ἀπέρχομαι, et ἀφίημι) (35). Un des apports majeurs de l'étude, notamment par rapport à Meeks et Nicholson, consiste à intégrer le vocabulaire de l'envoi dans ce mouvement de descente et de montée. Les deux verbes ἀποστέλλω et πέμπω, aux voix active et passive, sont distingués en anglais par *send out* — «envoyer» et *send forth* — «envoyer en avant»; ils sont souvent considérés comme synonymes, mais sans que la différence de signification apparaisse ici clairement. Le sens d'«expédier» — *send off, dispatch* selon Liddell-Scott ne convainc pas davantage (41). Mais il est pertinent d'assortir le Leitmotiv et la sémantique de la mission. Le schème de descente/montée en perd de sa rigidité un peu unilatérale.

Les deux ch. 4 et 5 montrent la «fonction christologique du Leitmotiv de la descente/montée, en relation avec l'origine, l'identité et la relation de Jésus à Dieu», puis «dans son rapport à l'autorité de Jésus». Là encore, le parcours se révèle surtout thématique. Dans le premier cas, au ch. 4, c'est à l'aide des titres de «Fils, Fils de Dieu, Fils de l'Homme», complétés par à l'identification que Jésus fait de lui-même en recourant aux formules en «Moi, je suis», et son identification de la part d'autrui dans les termes de: «Prophète», «Messie», «Agneau de Dieu», «Roi d'Israël/Roi des Juifs», «Rabbi/Enseignant», «Seigneur» et «Messie». Dans le second cas, au ch. 5, en ce qui concerne l'autorité de Jésus, l'étude progresse à l'aide d'ἐξουσία et δύναμις, prolongés par «signe», «œuvre» et «prodige», «vie», d'après les six termes qui l'expriment dans le NT: ζωή, ζωή αἰώνιος, ζωοποιέω, βίος, et βιωτικός, les deux derniers n'étant pas employés par Jean (90). Peut-être aurait-il fallu préciser l'importance des verbes utilisés à propos du «signe» et de l'«œuvre», même si l'observation relève plus de la syntaxe que du thème. «Faire» est un verbe utilisé pour la création dans l'AT en ce qui concerne les deux réalités considérées; mais seul Jésus «fait» des signes, alors que les croyants peuvent «faire des œuvres plus grandes» que celles du Fils (Jn 14,12). Le verbe «œuvrer», par ailleurs, est employé avec «œuvre» en complément interne (Jn 3,21; 6,2; 9,4) pour caractériser le croyant et le «nous ecclésial», de manière à distinguer davantage encore ce qui relève de l'«œuvre». La «gloire» et le verbe «glorifier» arrivent ensuite (94-98: l'assimilation de la «glorification» à la crucifixion, acquise pour beaucoup, mériterait une problématisation). Ils sont suivis par l'examen d'équivalences, grâce à ce vocabulaire, aux récits de la Transfiguration et de l'Agonie (98-101) qui ne figurent pas dans le quatrième évangile. Les analyses sont stimulantes en faveur d'une compréhension unifiée du texte.

Le ch. 6 revient avec à propos sur la prière de Jn 17 et des versets attendants dans l'ensemble de l'évangile, mais surtout dans les ch. 13-17 (106-108), puis sur le «départ de Jésus de ce monde: crucifixio» (108-111), la «résurrection de Jésus: un temps d'apparitions» (111-113) — alors qu'en fait le vocabulaire synoptique à

ce sujet ne survient guère dans Jean —, le «retour de Jésus, le Fils à Dieu, au ciel» (113-116), et enfin la «montée de Jésus, vient le Paraclet et nouveaux retours de Jésus» (116-119) permettent d'honorer l'ensemble du message évangéliques grâce au prisme du Leitmotiv choisi. Le ch. 7 reprend, en une synthèse claire et dense, le propos du départ en résumant les acquis de l'étude.

Une bibliographie copieuse (187-210) met à jour la recherche pour le sujet étudié. Un index d'auteurs, des sources anciennes, à très large dominante des évangiles dans le NT, de sujets et de termes-clé complètent l'investigation en aidant à la consulter.

La méthode demeure à dominante thématique. La dimension structurale est surtout présente dans les annexes, tout en se reflétant quand même dans les descriptions au cours des chapitres. Une démarche taxinomique — de classification organique des thèmes — l'emporte sur un travail qui gagnerait à étudier la syntaxe à l'intérieur de laquelle les mots sont utilisés. L'interprétation proprement dite y aurait gagné. Un apport massif du quatrième évangile se trouve assuré, sans guère de valorisation du lien à l'AT, ce qui est fréquent dans l'exégèse johannique. Il n'est bien sûr jamais possible de tout faire dans le cadre d'une thèse déjà très étoffée et dont il faut féliciter l'auteure. C'est encore chercher à lui donner toute son importance et à lui souhaiter le succès qu'elle mérite que d'en exprimer les attentes au terme de la lecture. Le Leitmotiv et la constellation des thèmes apparentés plaident eux-mêmes en faveur d'une prise en compte de l'ecclésiologie — pour faire bref — du cœur même de la christologie johannique. Jésus n'est confessé comme Fils unique du Père, envoyé du Père, Messie d'Israël en faveur du monde entier que par des croyants qui le confessent comme tel. Certes, il est bien reconnu, dès le ciblage du propos, que «croire» est un autre leitmotiv (avec la minuscule) dans Jean (33). Mais les verbes de ce champ sémantique croisent ceux du Leitmotiv de la thèse. Ce serait un excellent biais pour articuler christologie et ecclésiologie, comme l'illustrent d'autres travaux, ceux d'Y.-M. Blanchard par exemple. Les bénéficiaires de la thèse et de l'enseignement de S.E. Humble lui sont d'ores et déjà reconnaissants du déploiement de son travail comme de son argumentation.

Rue de Sèvres, 35 bis  
F-75006 Paris

Yves SIMOENS

Jared COMPTON, *Psalm 110 and the Logic of Hebrews* (Library of New Testament Studies 537). London – New Delhi, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015. xiv-226 p. 16 × 24

The author's published doctoral dissertation, written under the direction of D.A. Carson at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Deerfield, IL), revisits the question of the role of Psalm 110 in Hebrews. New in Compton's thesis is the emphasis on the function of Psalm 110 in elucidating the structure of Hebrews, by which he means the logic of its argument. The author of Hebrews used Psalm 110, in his estimation, to tie together the expository sections of the letter. Compton also hopes that by examining the author's use of Psalm 110 he will shed light on the purpose of Hebrews and the problems its author attempted to solve.

The Introduction sets out the book's goals and surveys the previous literature on the topic. Four authors are treated in that section of chapter (Steven K. Stanley, James Kurianal, Gert J.C. Jordaan and Pieter Nel) each of whom understand Psalm 110 as the controlling Old Testament citation in Hebrews. Jordaan and Nel resurrect the proposal of George Buchanan that Hebrews is a "homiletical midrash on Psalm 110", advanced in his Anchor Bible commentary (*To the Hebrews* [AB 36; Garden City, NY 1976] xix).

Next follows a brief discussion of the plan of the book, focusing on three expository sections in Hebrews, which present the main lines of the author's argument. Those sections are chapters 1–2, 5–7 and 8–10. Compton's method traces the use of Psalm 110 by isolating the main idea in each of those expository sections and highlighting how the psalm functions to bring that idea to the fore.

A brief excursus on the audience and situation of Hebrews concludes the Introduction. The usual markers that would identify the audience as Jewish are called forth. Against them, Compton presents the counter arguments for an entirely Gentile audience, but without any clear indication of what the ethnic makeup of the recipients is. Compton concludes that the author of Hebrews wrote for an audience who took the Old Testament seriously, but who were slacking off in their practice of Christianity.

The book's second chapter takes up the first of three expository sections in Hebrews (1) 1,5–14, which establishes the messianic enthronement of the Son; (2) 2,5–9, which explains how the enthroned Messiah, by fulfilling Psalm 8, solves the Adam problem, i.e. how humans will regain the splendor that was lost through Adam's disobedience; and (3) 2,10–18, which demonstrates that it was both fitting and necessary for the messiah to die in order to solve the Adam problem.

Compton sees Psalm 110 as integral to understanding the logic of these three stages of the author's argument. Hebrews 1,5–14 undoubtedly establishes the Son's exaltation on the basis of the psalm, but not all of the expository sections treated in this chapter have a clear reference to Psalm 110. The psalm is only explicitly cited in 1,5–14, where it may suggest a messianic enthronement. Compton is also correct to conclude that the psalm is alluded to in 2,5–9. It is nowhere cited or alluded to in 2,10–18, which says nothing of messianic exaltation, but rather stresses Jesus' solidarity in suffering with humans as constitutive of his high priestly service. The extent to which the messianic aspect of the Son's exaltation in these three sections of Hebrews 1–2 can be pressed remains to be seen. Hebrews 2,5–9 appears to lack an explicit messianic connection because the Son is not called Christ, but is rather called Jesus in 2,9. The focus on his suffering and death looks more to the human Jesus being made lower than the angels than to an exalted Messiah.

Chapter Three considers the author's exposition in Hebrews 5–7. Again it divides into three distinct units: (1) 5,1–10, which establishes that the enthroned messiah is a priestly messiah; (2) 7,1–10, which argues that the messiah's priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood, due to its permanence; and (3) 7,11–28, which explains how that permanence implies the ability to bring to perfection.

Compton states that the role of Psalm 110 in these three expository sections is to establish the possibility of a new priesthood in 5,1–10, by claiming that the enthronement of the messiah necessarily creates the expectation that he will be a priest. In 7,1–10 Psalm 110 functions to establish that if Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek, then he holds this High Priesthood forever. Finally, in 7,11–28 the permanence of Jesus' High Priesthood established in the previous

section accounts for Hebrews' understanding of perfection. It is this factor that makes Jesus' high priesthood unlike the Levitical priesthood. Compton, however, goes further and ties the function of Psalm 110 in Hebrews 5–7 to its function in 7,11–28 by claiming that, since Jesus is a Melchizedekian High Priest, he also solves the Adam problem of 2,5–18.

Compton's discussion of the logic of Psalm 110 in these three texts of Hebrews rests more on inference than exegesis. Even though the author cites only Psalm 110,4 in these sections, Compton sees connections between both verses 1b and 4 of the psalm at work in the discussion of the High Priesthood of Melchizedek. He does not clearly explain why one would naturally expect that an enthroned Messiah would also be a High Priest. If the author intended that connection, why didn't he include both verse 1b and 4 of the psalm? In fact, elsewhere he seems to suggest that the reader should have no expectation that the Son would be a High Priest at all (7,13–14; 8,4). The function of Psalm 110,4 in 7,11–28 is to emphasize the eternity of Jesus' High Priesthood as 7,25 and 28 explain. How the Adam problem of 2,5–18 is solved in this expository section is not explicit in the text.

The fourth chapter examines four units in Hebrews 8–10: (1) 8,1–13 presents the author's main point, that Jesus is the exalted Son and Melchizedekian High Priest, who ministers in the heavenly sanctuary; (2) 9,1–10 links the provisional status of the tabernacle and its cultic worship to the first covenant, that then requires its replacement with a new covenant; (3) 9,11–28 explains why a heavenly priesthood requires better sacrifices that grant full access to God; and (4) 10,1–18 argues that the Levitical cult could never offer definitive forgiveness, and so there was a need for better sacrifices that could indeed accomplish this goal.

The texts treated in Chapter Four present the greatest challenge to Compton's thesis because Psalm 110 is not explicitly cited in them and is only alluded to in (1) and (4). Despite his claim that Psalm 110 is integral to the argument of these expository sections, it really only plays a minor supportive role to place Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary (8,1) and to establish the completion of his high priestly service (10,12–13). Most commentators on Hebrews understand Jeremiah 31,31–34 to play a more important role than Psalm 110 in the central argument of the sermon, running from 8,1 – 10,18. Curiously, Compton claims that the Jeremiah text is not explicitly tied to the author's argument in these chapters (105).

Chapter Five summarizes the book's findings and offers some implications they might have for understanding the situation of Hebrews. Oddly, the possible situations described in this chapter do not correspond to the situations of the audience described at the end of the Introduction. Here, Compton introduces the idea that the recipients of Hebrews doubted the scriptural plausibility of a suffering Messiah (170). This claim flies in the face of his description of the audience in the Introduction as individuals who understood "the Old Testament to be divinely revealed" (17). Moreover, in the extensive treatment of the necessity of the Messiah's death in Chapter Two, there is no hint that the recipients of Hebrews harbored any doubt about the necessity of the Messiah's death. Rather, the necessity of that death was proposed as the solution to the Adam problem (65). And yet Compton claims the audience's doubt is the main burden of the letter (171).

Compton has corroborated the significance of Psalm 110,1b and 4 in the Christological exposition of Hebrews, as others have before him. His claim that

Psalm 110 is essential for understanding the structure of Hebrews is, however, not finally persuasive. First, there is more to Hebrews than just exposition, and so studying expository sections apart from hortatory ones only represents a part of the author's argument in Hebrews. Furthermore, Compton does not treat all of the expository sections of the sermon. He omits the lengthy exposition on faith and the heroes of faith in 11,1-40, where no citation or allusion to Psalm 110 occurs. This lack calls into question the role of the psalm in structuring the expository sections of sermon. Second, as pointed out in this review, Psalm 110 is not cited in every one of the expository sections considered. Some of the citations or allusions are critical for understanding the sermon's Christology, but others are incidental. Third, there is very little structural analysis of Hebrews in this study, as that is usually understood, e.g. rhetorical structure, linguistic structure, etc. Rather, Compton presents the connections between Psalm 110 and the exposition in Hebrews as more thematic and theological/christological than structural. He has actually confused the structure of Hebrews with the logic of its argument. An excursus at the end of the book that summarizes some views of the use of the Old Testament in Hebrews confirms this assessment.

Having set out to prove a difficult thesis, Compton has explained much about use of Psalm 110 in Hebrews. His readers will be grateful for the effort he has made in explicating the two major themes that Psalm 110 elucidates in the sermon: the exaltation of the Son (110,1b) and his appointment as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (110,4). To this end, his work will be appreciated by those who are familiar with the more difficult questions the sermon raises for contemporary readers.

3415 T Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
U.S.A.

Alan C. MITCHELL

## Varia

Akiva COHEN, *Matthew and the Mishnah*. Redefining Identity and Ethos in the Shadow of the Second Temple's Destruction (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe 418). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2016. xviii-637 p. 15.5 × 23. €119,00

*Matthew and the Mishnah* by Akiva Cohen (AC) is a revised doctoral dissertation defended in 2008 at Tel Aviv University, Israel. The author has taught New Testament studies at Jerusalem University College and at Ben Gurion University in the Deichmann Program for Jewish and Christian Literature of the Hellenistic-Roman Era, Israel. In his present publication, AC asks the question how the author of the Gospel according to Matthew and the editors of the Mishnah reconstruct their community identity and ethos after the destruction of the Second Temple. The book is a voluminous study containing fourteen chapters (over 600 pages),

provided with illustrations, Index of Sources, Index of Modern Authors, and the appendix on the seat of Moses. The impressive bibliography counts 67 pages and lists the publications in English, German, Hebrew, French, and Italian.

In Chapter 1, "Methodological Issues" (1-31), the author poses his main research question: in what way the destruction of the Second Temple transformed the identity and ethos of Judaism and emerging Christianity. Subsequently, drawing mostly on Daniel Schwartz's short introductory text, AC presents the recent currents in interpretation of the Second Temple's destruction impact. Next, the author justifies methodologically the comparison between Matthew and the Mishnah (both constitute formative texts and both were written after the destruction of the Temple). In this and many other aspects, the First Gospel differs from the Qumran sectarian documents. Finally, in the concluding paragraphs of Chapter 1, AC offers some methodological clarifications on the preference of redaction criticism over sociological methods and on the priority given to textual analysis in order to read the identity and ethos of Jewish and Christian communities.

Chapter 2, "Matthew's Gospel: Introductory Matters" (32-99), starts with a discussion of the authorship of the Gospel according to Matthew. Both internal and external evidence, according to AC, argues strongly for the Jewish author of the work to be located in the period after 70 A.D. The author marshals many substantive arguments in support of his thesis and engages in a systematic rebuttal of the recent article by Donald Hagner who argued for a pre-70 date of Matthew. Discussing the convoluted issue of Matthew's original language, AC points at the elements of Hebrew conceptuality retained in the Greek text, which bespeaks not Matthew's dependence on the Hebrew Gospel, but rather the common audience for which both works were written (pace James Edwards, *The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition* [Grand Rapids, MI 2009]). Further, the author touches briefly upon Matthew's sources (the First Gospel as a rewritten version of Mark, combined with Q and oral traditions), its genre (Greco-Roman *bios*), and its location in Galilee. The final pages of Chapter 2 are dedicated to the construction of Matthew's audience (the social location of the community will be exposed only in Chapter 5), or rather to the polemic with Richard Bauckham's critique of the thesis that Gospels were written for specific communities (here see Cohen's extensive use of D.C. Sim's article, "The Gospels for all Christians? A Response to Richard Bauckham", *JSNT* 84 [2001] 3-27).

In Chapter 3, "Jewish Christianity: The Search for Appropriate Terminology and the Mattheans" (100-123), AC highlights the implications of methodological approaches to "Jewish Christianity" for Matthean identity. The author discards such labels for the Matthean community as "Jewish Christians", "Christian Judaism", or "Matthean Judaism", opting instead for even more controversial "Matthean Pharisaism". The Mattheans seem to be still within their local Jewish community boundaries (cf. Matt 10,17), but in the same time their highly charged theological polemics are indicators that they are moving away from their Jewish location. Responding to Daniel Boyarin's recent article ("Rethinking Jewish Christianity", *JQR* 99 [2009] 7-36), Cohen argues that the worship of Jesus makes the community of Matthew a new species within Judaism. "Matthean Pharisaism", according to the author, denotes the community made up of ethnic Jews who recognized Jesus as the Messiah, believed in his divine status, observed the Torah, and moved towards an inclusive stance with respect to their non-Jewish fellow believers.



In Chapter 4, “The Theological Orientation of Matthew’s Sources” (24-138), AC exposes briefly the theological orientation of Mark (the Pauline portrait of Jesus), Q (Christianity as a reform movement with no-Gentile mission), and the character of Matthew itself. The community behind the Gospel of Matthew is further examined in Chapter 5, “Locating the Mattheans within Their Late First-Century Context” (139-222), which presents various scholarly readings of the Matthean *Sitz im Leben*. The author starts with Ulrich Luz’s understanding of Matthean Jewish Christianity as founded by Q’s itinerant messengers and the prophets of the Son of Man, the community at a turning point in its history, which reads the destruction of the Temple as God’s judgment upon Israel, and extends their preaching to the Gentiles. Subsequently, AC discusses Anders Runesson’s idea of the Mattheans identified as “Christ-centered Judaism” and engaged in a Pharisaic intragroup conflict. The Mattheans would hold a neutral attitude towards public synagogues and a rather negative attitude to the Pharisaic association synagogues (the distinction introduced by Runesson with whom AC agrees). They constituted an urban, Jewish restoration movement within the Pharisaic association, with a post-destruction Gentile mission perceived as fulfillment of Israel’s eschatological vision. Subsequently, by referring to Joel Marcus, AC shows how the Mattheans might have functioned in the liturgical context of the Pharisaic association synagogue, and how they lived their call to the dual Jewish and Gentile mission. The rest of Chapter 5 is dedicated to the illustration of how the Mattheans related to the Gentiles who joined their community (no circumcision and ethnic distinction; a shared table fellowship). The author ultimately explains their coexistence with the bilateral halakhic standards that the community had for its Jewish and non-Jewish members.

Chapter 6, “Matthew and the Temple” (223-316), by far the longest chapter of the book, contains the analyses of the Matthean terms and sixteen specific passages related to the Temple (Matt 4,1-11; 5,23-24; 8,1-4; 12,1-8; 17,24-27; 21,12-17; 21,23-27; 22,1-14; 23,16-22; 23,34-39; 24,1-2; 24,15-22,28; 26,47-56; 26,57-68; 27,3-10; 27,38-43). The analyses are always carried out according to the same pattern: the investigation of the sources and more or less detailed comments on the passage in question. What results from this chapter, is the vision of the Mattheans’ Torah observant ethos with the Temple standing at the heart of their Jewish identity. In the post-destruction period, the ideas of the Temple and cult underwent a deep Christologization and became embodied in the presence of Jesus.

Chapter 7, “Approaching First-Century Synagogues” (317-327), marks the transitional point in Cohen’s study, as the author turns his attention from the Gospel of Matthew to the Mishnah. In this chapter, one can find some valuable hints on the methodological and archeological advances in the study of the first-century synagogues, their origins and functional character (places of social gatherings, judicial proceedings, hostel accommodation, communal meals, religious instruction, prayer, and Torah-reading). Here also, AC introduces his readers to the Mishnah treatment of the Temple theme, which starts at Chapter 8, entitled simply “The Mishnah” (328-376). This chapter contains the introductory matters like the sources and authorship, Temple-related discourse, the historical, haggadic, and biblical origins of the Mishnah. A huge part of Chapter 8 is dedicated to Jacob Neusner’s understanding of the Mishnah, with which the author agrees. Neusner envisages the Mishnah as an autonomous document presenting the new theological orientation of Israel in the tragic period of the two devastating wars with Rome. In this document,



the Tannaitic sages, using the creative power of their language, expressed and adjusted the Temple-centered ethos to the times in which the Temple was absent.

In the next Chapter 9, "The Myth of Javneh and the *Taqqanôt* of Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai" (377-396), AC briefly refers to the scholarly discussions on the character of Javneh gathering, avoiding the question of its historicity, and focusing instead on its socio-theological impact (the formation of the post-destruction coalition). The author is more interested in the way the redactors of the Mishnah reconstructed Israel's post-destruction cosmos and illustrates it with a closer look at *Taqqanôt* of Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai. AC's conclusion is that the Mishnah tries to preserve, not to replace, Israel's Temple ethos, adapting it to the daily life of the people in the new Temple-less situation. Mishnah thus becomes a ritual text through which Israel continues to maintain its Temple-centered identity and ethos.

Chapter 10, "Entrance to the Forbidden City: The Utopian Temple of Rabbinic Imaginings" (397-424), explains how the redactors of the Mishnah lead their readers back to Jerusalem and to the priestly courts of the Temple. The author focuses on the Temple-related theology of the Mishnah, puts it in the post-destruction historical context, and stresses the character of the Mishnah as a foundational document. The rest of the chapter is the illustration of the Tannaitic reactions to the loss of the Temple, including the question of its reconstruction. The author ultimately doesn't spot in the Mishnaic texts any hope for a rebuilt Temple of stones, and denies the impact of apocalyptic eschatology on the Mishnah.

Chapter 11, "The Mishnah's Transformation of Temple Sacrality" (425-439), envisages the process of the transference of the Temple's sacred time within Jewish liturgy (linkage between prayer and Temple sacrifices). The author also touches upon the relationship between the Beth Midrash and the synagogue as bearers of the Temple sacrality. In a similar way, in Chapter 12, "The Spatial Transference of the Temple's Sacrality" (440-479), AC illustrates the transference of the Temple's sacred space upon the Beth Midrash and synagogues. The process is traceable in the synagogue architecture, symbolism and liturgical arrangements (the role of priests, the waving of *lulab*, the counting of 'omer, the recitation of *hallel*, public fast days, *ner tamid*, *menorot*, and the *shofar*). A brief Chapter 13, "Ways in Which the Tannaim Adapted the Daily Life of the People of Israel to Post-Destruction Realities" (480-489), draws conclusions from the two preceding chapters. The Mishnah depicts the Temple as still standing, and in the same time states that Israel's life and sanctification continues eternally independent of the historical Jerusalem Temple.

Finally, the last Chapter 14, "Matthew and the Mishnah in the Shadow of the Temple's Destruction" (490-531), offers a comparison between Matthew and the Mishnah's approaches to the Temple by focusing on their interpretations of *paroket* and Holy of Holies. The final passage of Matt 27,45-54 analyzed by the author reveals the Matthean program of Israel's sanctification, which is absolutely different from the Mishnaic one. Whereas the Mishnah tries to preserve the Temple-based order in the post-destruction period, the "torn veil" in Matthew marks the access to God granted to both pagans and Jews, the Gentile mission, the beginning of the new community, and the deconstruction of the Temple that is now embodied in Christ, the incarnation of God.

*Matthew and the Mishnah* by Akiva Cohen is a well-documented scholarly work with a relevant and well-argued thesis. There are many merits of this book

that deserve a mention. Readers will surely appreciate the language of the author and his methodological narration that smoothly leads them from one discussed point to another. With great erudition, Cohen introduces us to the scholarly discussions and vast bibliography on the Gospel of Matthew and the Mishnah. He combines his redaction criticism with archeology and art, which makes his study all the more interesting and interdisciplinary. Cohen's book offers a valuable tool to those who look for general guidelines in their reading of Matthew and Mishnah. The author aptly summarizes other scholarly views on the discussed matters and enters into a systematic and well-informed polemic with them.

Passing to the minor flaws of Cohen's work, for some readers its extensive, almost encyclopedic character might result in a certain disappointment. Because of the vast boundaries set for the project, many issues in the book are approached in a very general, almost superficial manner. As an example one could give the presentation of sources, genre, and location of Matthew's Gospel, or the issues of bilateral halakha, table fellowship, and the Gentile mission of the Mattheans toward pagans (here an interesting point of contact might be perceived between Matthew and Paul, cf. David J. Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews. Jewish Contours of Pauline Flexibility in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23* [WUNT II/304; Tübingen 2011]). One can also wonder whether the term "Matthean Pharisaism", with which the author describes the community of Matthew, is not more misleading than the "Jewish Christianity", or whether it corresponds accurately to the social stratification of the Matthean community, which the author intentionally leaves apart, focusing only on the data enclosed in textual analyses. Additionally, despite the author's clear style and accessible language, readers would surely appreciate summaries at the end of each chapter, and a slightly reduced number of quotations from other authors, which decisively slows down the process of reading.

Whatever criticism one can level against *Matthew and the Mishnah*, it cannot obscure the true value of this work. It certainly contributes to our better understanding of the community standing behind the Gospel of Matthew. It is also a great tribute to the thought and *œuvre* of the late Jacob Neusner, whose ideas on the character and purpose of the Mishnah the author presents and shares with great mastery and erudition. All in all, *Matthew and the Mishnah* is an example of the best standards of biblical scholarship and it's highly recommendable both to the lecturers and students of the Gospel of Matthew and rabbinic literature. It has a potential to inspire the minds of the advanced and beginning scholars to look for the answers to the questions on the formative texts of Early Christianity and on the communities standing behind them.

Institute of Biblical Studies  
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin  
ul. Wajdeloty 3/53  
20-604 Lublin (Poland)

Marcin KOWALSKI

## LIBRI AD DIRECTIONEM MISSI

**Aichele**, George, *Letters of Jude and Second Peter*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Paranoia and the Slaves of Christ (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-270. p. 15,5 × 23,5. £13,49

**Ascough**, Richard S., *1 & 2 Thessalonians*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Encountering the Christ Group at Thessalonike (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xii-99 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8,99

*Athenaeum* (Studi di Letteratura e Storia dell'Antichità pubblicati sotto gli auspici dell'Università di Pavia, 2016 Fascicolo II). Como, New Press Edizioni, 2016. 367-765 p. 17 × 24, €60,00

**Aymer**, Margaret, *James*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Diaspora Rhetoric of a Friend of God (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-90 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8,99

**Barreto**, Eric D. – **Skinner**, Matthew L. – **Walton**, Steve, eds., *Reading Acts in the Discourses of Masculinity and Politics* (Library of New Testament Studies 559). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xviii-186, p. 16 × 24. \$77.9

**Boda**, Mark J. – **Floyd**, Michael H. – **Toffelmire**, Colin M., eds., *The Book of the Twelve and the New Form Criticism* (Ancient Near East Monographs 10). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. x-366 p. 15 × 23. \$39.95

**Børresen**, Kari Elisabeth – **Valerio**, Adriana, eds., *The High Middle Ages* (The Bible and Women 6.2). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xiv-454 p. 15 × 23. \$57.95

**Brenner-Idan**, Athalya – **Lee**, Archie C.C., *Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles I* (Texts@Contexts 5). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-270, p. 16 × 24. £91,80

**Burke**, Tony – **Landau**, Brent, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*. More Non-canonical Scriptures, Vol. 1. Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016. 1 -585 p. 16 × 24. \$75.00

**Carey**, Greg, *Luke*. An Introduction and Study Guide: All Flesh Shall See God's Salvation (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-102 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8,99

**Davies**, Eryl W., *Numbers*. An Introduction and Study Guide: The Road to Freedom (T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-86 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8,99

**De Carlo**, Franco, *Vangelo secondo Matteo*. Nuova versione, introduzione e commento (I Libri Biblici 1). Milano, Paoline Editoriale Libri, 2016. 762 p. 15,5 × 23,5. €65,45

**De Vito**, Stefania, *La schiavitù di pace*. Una prospettiva pragmalinguistica di Rm 6, 15-23. Roma, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2016. 334 p. 17 × 24. €18,00

**Dell**, Katharine J., *Job*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? (T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xiv-112 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8,99

**Doak, Brian R.**, *Phoenician Aniconism*. In its Mediterranean and Ancient Near Eastern Contexts (Archaeology and Biblical Studies 21). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xxii-182 p. 15 × 23. \$27,95

**Dürr, Walter – Kunz, Ralph, Hg.**, *Gottes Kirche re-imaginieren*. Reflexionen über die Kirche und ihre Sendung in 21. Jahrhundert (Glaube und Gesellschaft 3; Studia Oecumenica Friburgensia 76). Münster, Aschendorff Verlag, 2016. 210 S. 16 × 23.5. €29,00

**Estes, Douglas – Sheridan, Ruth**, *How John Works*. Storytelling in the Fourth Gospel (Resources for Biblical Study 86). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xii-347 p. 15 × 23. \$46.95

**Firth, David**, *1&2 Samuel*. An Introduction and Study Guide: A Kingdom Comes (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xii-94 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8,99

**Fowl, Stephen E.**, *Ephesians*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Being a Christian, at Home and in the Cosmos (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-80 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8,99

**Fuchs, Albert, Hg.**, *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt (SNUT)* 41 (Serie A: Aufsätze). Linz, SNUT, 2016. 762 p. 15 × 23, €48,00

**Gane, Roy E. – Taggar-Cohen, Ada, eds.**, *Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature*. The Legacy of Jacob Milgrom and Beyond (Resources for Biblical Study 82). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xxiv-525 p. 15 × 23. \$69.95

**Gilbert, Maurice**, *Les livres sapientiaux* (Mon ABC de la Bible). Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 2017. 165 p. 12.5 × 19.5. €12,00

**Grabbe, Leslie L.**, *1 and 2 Kings*. An Introduction and Study Guide (T&T Clark's Study Guide to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-111 p. 15.5 × 23.5. £13,49

**Gruca-Macaulay, Alexandra**, *Lydia as a Rhetorical Construct in Acts* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity 18). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xiv-321 p. 15 × 23. \$45.95

**Harrison, James R. – Wellborn, Larry. L., eds.**, *The First Urban Churches 2*. Roman Corinth (Writings from the Greco-Roman Culture 8). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xvi-353 p. 15 × 23. **£46,50**

**Havea, Jione – Lau, Peter H. W., eds.**, *Reading Ruth in Asia* (International Voices in Biblical Studies 7). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. x-148 p. 15 × 23. \$24.95

**Heilig, Christopher**, *Paul's Triumph*. Reassessing 2 Corinthians 2:14 in its Literary and Historical Context (Biblical Tools and Studies 27). Leuven, Peeters, 2017. xvi 338 p. 14.8 × 21. €88,00

**Hendel, Ronald**, *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (Text Critical Studies 10). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xviii-388 p. 15 × 23. \$45.95

**Houston, Walter J.**, *Amos*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Justice and Violence (T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-116 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8,99

**Hutton, Jeremy M. – Rubin, Aaron D., eds.**, *Epigraphy, Philology, and the Hebrew Bible*. Methodological Perspectives on Philological and Comparative Study of the Hebrew Bible in Honor of Jo Ann Hackett (Ancient Near Eastern Monographs 12). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xiv-394 p. 15 × 23. \$49.95

**Jeal, Roy R.**, *Exploring Philemon. Freedom, Brotherhood, and Partnership in the New Society (Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity 2)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xxx-230 p. 15 × 23. \$30.95

**Kiel, Yishai**, *Sexuality in the Babylonian Talmud. Christian and Sasanian Contexts in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016. x-303 p. 15 × 23. £ 64.99

**Kline, Jonathan G.**, *Allusive Soundplay in the Hebrew Bible (Ancient Israel and its Literature 28)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xiii-155 p. 15 × 23. \$27.95

**Klink III, Edward W.**, *John (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 4)*. Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan, 2016. 971 p. 19 × 25. \$49,99

**Knapp, Andrew**, *Royal Apologetic in the Ancient Near East (Writings from the Ancient World Supplement Series 4)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xx-420 p. 15 × 23. \$59,95

**Kraus, Wolfgang – van den Meer, Michaël N. – Meiser, Martin**, eds., *XV Congress of the International Organization for the Septuagint and Cognate Studies (Munich 2013) (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 64)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. viii-796 p. 15 × 23. \$99.95

**Kreuzer, Siegfried**, *The Bible in Greek. Translation, Transmission, and Theology in the Septuagint (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 63)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. viii-325 p. 15 × 23. \$44.95

**L'Hour, Jean**, *Genèse 1–2,4a. Commentaire (Études Biblique, Nouvelle série 71)*. Leuven, Peeters, 2016. 268 p. 16 × 24. €98,99

**Laird, Donna**, *Negotiating Power in Ezra-Nehemiah (Ancient Israel and its Literature 26)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xii-403 p. 15 × 23. \$55.95

**Lee, Lydia**, *Mapping Judah's Fate in Ezekiel's Oracles against the Nations (Ancient Near Eastern Monographs 15)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xvii-297 p. 15 × 23. £23,61

**Loiseau, Anne-Françoise**, *L'influence de l'araméen sur les traducteurs de la LXX principalement sur les traducteurs grecs postérieurs, ainsi que sur les scribes de la Vorlage de la LXX (Septuagint and Cognate Studies 65)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xiii-261 p. 15 × 23. €45,21

**Looijer, Gwynned de**, *The Qumran Paradigm. A Critical Evaluation of Some Foundational Hypotheses in the Construction of the Qumran Sect (Early Judaism and Its Literature 4)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xviii-298 p. 15 × 23. \$37.95

**Lortie, Christopher R.**, *Mighty to Save. A Literary and Historical Study of Habakkuk 3 and its Traditions (Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament 99)*. Sankt Ottilien, EOS Verlag, 2016. 160 p. 16.5 × 24.5. €24,95

**Marchal, Joseph A.**, ed., *The People Beside Paul. The Philippian Assembly and History from Below (Early Christianity and its Literature 17)*. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xiv-338 p. 15 × 23. \$49.95

**Marchal, Joseph A.**, *Philippians. An Introduction and Study Guide: Historical Problems, Hierarchical Visions, Hysterical Anxieties (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament)*. London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. viii-102 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8,99

**Martone, Corrado**, ed., *Scritti di Qumran. Edizione bilingue con puntazione vocalica, introduzione, traduzione e note, Vol. 2 (Studi biblici 187)*. Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 2016. 330 p. 13.5 × 21. €32,00

**Matthews**, Shelly, *The Acts of the Apostles*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Taming the Tongues of Fire (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xvi-96 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8,99

**McConville**, James Gordon, *Joshua*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Crossing Divides (T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xii-82 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8,99

**Mills**, Mary E., *Jeremiah*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Prophecy in a Time of Crisis (T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. viii-95 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8,99

**Neef**, Hans-Dieter, *Abramo alla prova*. Studio esegetico e teologico di *Genesi* 22, 1-19 (Studi biblici 184). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 2016. 129 p. 13.5 × 21. €15,00

**Nobel**, Ludovic, *Introduction au Nouveau Testament* (Mon ABC de la Bible). Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 2017. 175 p. 12.5 × 19.5. €12,00

**Paddison**, Angus, *Theologians on Scripture*. London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016. x-236 p. 16 × 24. €94,99

**Person, Jr.**, Raymond F. – **Rezetko**, Robert, eds., *Empirical Models Challenging Biblical Criticism* (Ancient Israel and its Literature 25). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xiii-415 p. 15 × 23. \$51.95

**Radner**, Ephraim, *Time and the Word*. Figural Reading of the Christian Scriptures. Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016. 326 p. 16 × 24. \$50.00

**Ramelli**, Ilaria L.E., ed., *Evagrius, Kephalaia Gnostika: A New Translation of the Unreformed Text from the Syriac* (Writings from the Greco-Roman World 38). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. lxxxviii-436 p. 15 × 23. \$65,95

**Reece**, Steve, *Paul's Large Letters*. Paul's Autographic Subscriptions in the Light of Ancient Epistolary Conventions (Library of New Testament Studies 561). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-317, p.16 × 24. \$76,49

**Robbins**, Vernon K. – **von Thaden Jr.**, Robert H. – **Bruehler**, Bart B., eds., *Foundations for Sociorhetorical Exploration*. A Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity Reader (Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity 4). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xxv-492 p. 15 × 23. \$65.95

**Roberts**, Mark D., *Ephesians* (The Story of God Bible Commentary). Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan, 2016. xvi-288 p. 15 × 23. \$29.99

**Robinson**, William E.W., *Metaphor, Morality, and the Spirit in Roman 8: 1-17* (Early Christianity and its Literature 20). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. x-182 p. 15 × 23. \$29.95

**Runia**, David T. – **Sterling**, Gregory E., eds., *The Studia Philonica Annual*. Studies in Hellenistic Judaism XXVII, 2015. Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. viii-478 p. 15,5 × 23,5. \$51,95

**Schmeller**, Thomas, *Kreuz und Kraft I*. Untersuchungen zur Jesusüberlieferung und zu frühchristlichen Gemeinden (Stuttgarter Biblische Aufsatzbände 62). Stuttgart, Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2016. 304 p. 14.5 × 20.5. €52,00

**Schüssler Fiorenza**, Elizabeth, *1 Peter*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Reading against the Grain (T&T Clark Study Guides to the Old Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-98 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8.99

**Screnock**, John, *Traductor Scriptor*. The Old Greek Translation of Exodus 1–14 as Scribal Activity (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 174). Leiden, Brill, 2017. xvi-214 p. 16 × 23.5. €114,00



**Seidl**, Theodor, *Ijobs Monologe*. Sprachwissenschaftliche Analysen zu Ijob 29-31 (Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament 101). Sankt Ottilien, EOS Verlag, 2017. x-278 p. 14.8 × 21. €24,95

**Smith**, Abraham, *Mark*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Shaping the Life and Legacy of Jesus (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-270, p. 15,5 × 23,5. £13.49

**Smith**, Barry D., *The Meaning of Jesus' Death*. Reviewing the New Testament's Interpretations (T&T Clark Biblical Studies). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xii-194, p. 16 × 24. £85.49

**Smith**, Steve, *The Fate of the Jerusalem Temple in Luke-Acts*. An Intertextual Approach to Jesus' Laments Over Jerusalem and Stephen's Speech (Library of New Testament Studies 553). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xvi-234-156 p. 16 × 24. €76,50

**Star**, John, *Classifying the Aramaic Texts from Qumran*. A Statistical Analysis of Linguistic Features (Library of Second Temple Studies 89). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xxiii-350 p. 16 × 24. £84,99

**Sterling**, Gregory E., ed., *Studies in Philo in Honor of David Runia* (The Studia Philonica Annual XXVIII, 2016: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. 465 p. 15 × 23. \$61.95

**Still**, Todd D. – **Whilhite**, David E., eds., *Pauline and Patristic Scholars in Debate* (The Apostolic Fathers and Paul 2). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xxii-282 p. 16 × 24. £76, 50

**Stone**, Michael E., *Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Angels and Biblical Heroes* (Early Judaism and its Literature 45). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xiv-307 p. 15 × 23. \$55.95

**Stuckenbruck**, Loren T. – **Boccaccini**, Gabriel, eds., *Enoch and the Synoptic Gospels*. Reminiscences, Allusions, Intertextuality (Early Judaism and its Literature 44). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xii-447 p. 15 × 23. \$62.95

**Tappenden**, Frederick S., *Resurrection in St. Paul*. Cognition, Metaphor, and Transformation (Early Judaism and its Literature 19). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xx-289 p. 15 × 23. \$37.95

**Thomas**, Kenneth J., *A Restless Search*. A History of Persian Translations of the Bible (History of Bible Translation 3). Philadelphia, PA, Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship, American Bible Society, 2015. xxii-554 p. 15 × 23. \$74,95

**Tollerton**, David, ed., *A New Hollywood Moses*. On the Spectacle and Reception of *Exodus*: Gods and Kings (Biblical Reception 4). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-272, p. 16 × 24. £85.49

**Twomey**, Jay, *2 Corinthians*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Crisis and Conflict (T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. v-98 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £8.99

**Vanden Eykel**, Eric M., *"But Their Faces Were All Looking Up."* Author and Reader in the Protevangelium of James (The Reception of Jesus in the First Three Centuries 1). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016. xiv-204 p. 16 × 24. £85,49

**Venard**, Olivier-Thomas – **Édart**, Jean-Baptiste – **Bianchini**, Francesco *et alii*, eds, *Saint Paul, Épître aux Philippiens* (La Bible en ses Traditions 2). Leuven, Peeters, 2016. 174 p. 24 × 30. €85,00

**Wainwright**, Elaine M. – **Myles**, Robert J. – **Olivares**, Carlos, *Matthew*. An Introduction and Study Guide: Basileia of the Heavens is Near at Hand



(T&T Clark Study Guides to the New Testament). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. viii-86 p. 15,5 × 23.5. £8.99

**Wengert**, Timothy J., *Leggere la Bibbia con Lutero* (Studi Biblici 186). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 2016. 177 p. 13.5 × 21. €15,00

**Wenkel**, David H., *Coins as Cultural Texts in the World of the New Testament* (T&T Clark Biblical Studies). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xxv-195, p. 16 × 24. £87.29

**Wiarda**, Timothy, *Dual Testimony in Paul, John and Luke* (Library of New Testament Studies 565). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. x-270 p. 16 × 24. £72,00

**Wilson**, Ian D., *Kingship and Memory in Ancient Judah*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017. xii-308 p. 16 × 24. £64.00

**Wit**, Hans de – **Dyk**, Janet, eds., *Bible and Transformation*. The Promise of Intercultural Bible Reading (Semeia Studies 81). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. viii-478 p. 15 × 23. \$54,95

**Yli-Karjanmaa**, Sami, *Reincarnation in Philo of Alexandria* (Studia Philonica Monographs 7). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2015. xvii-310 p. 15 × 23. \$42,95

**Younger, Jr.**, K. Lawson, *A Political History of the Arameans*. From Their Origins to the End of Their Polities (Archaeology and Biblical Studies 13). Atlanta, GA, SBL Press, 2016. xii-857 p. 16 × 23.5. \$97.95

**Zacharias**, H. Daniel, *Matthew's Presentation of the Son of David*. Davidic Tradition and Typology in the Gospel of Matthew (T&T Clark Biblical Studies). London, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017. xi-224 p. 16 × 24. £85,49

**Zenger**, Eric, *I Salmi*. Preghiera e poesia (Studi Biblici 183). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 2016. 150 p. 13.5 × 21. €15,00